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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
ISLE OF WIGHT;
MILITARY,
ECCLESIASTICAL, CIVIL, & NATURAL:

TO WHICH IS ADDED
A VIEW OF ITS AGRICULTURE.

By the Rev. RICHARD WARNER;

EDITOR OF

"HAMPSHIRE EXTRACTED FROM DOMESDAY BOOK," AND OF
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AND AUTHOR OF

"TOPOGRAPHICAL REMARKS RELATING TO HAMPSHIRE," AND
"AN ATTEMPT TO ASCERTAIN THE SITUATION OF
THE ANCIENT CLAUSENTUM."

"Tu nimio nec stricta gelu, nec fidere fervens,
Cementi cælo, temperieque places.
Cum pareret Natura parens varioque favore
Divideret dotes omnibus una locis,
Seposuit potiora tibi, matremque professa,
'Insula sis felix, plenaque pacis' ait.
'Quicquid amat luxus, quicquid desiderat usus,
Ex te proveniet, vel aliundè tibi.' "

SOUTHAMPTON.

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MDCCKCV.



TO
SIR WILLIAM HEATHCOTE, BART.

AND
WILLIAM CHUTE, ESQ.
MEMBERS FOR THE COUNTY OF HANTS,

SIR HARRY BURRARD, BART.

GEORGE ROSE, ESQ.

JAMES MOWBRAY, ESQ.

AND
THE REV. WILLIAM GILPIN,
THE FOLLOWING EPITOMIZED
HISTORY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT,

IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR OBEDIENT

AND OBLIGED

HUMBLE SERVANT,

BATH,
February 1, 1795.

R. WARNER, JUN.



ADVERTISEMENT.

SEVERAL publications have already appeared relative to the Isle of Wight. It will therefore be naturally expected, that the author of the present one either produce something *new* on the subject, or present the materials before offered to the public, in a different and improved form.

Both these objects it has been his endeavour to attain; with what success the reader will best pronounce.

Frequent

Frequent visits to the island, and habitual propensities,* allowed him opportunity and inclination to make some collections relative to its natural history; and a conviction that very little information of this kind had hitherto been given to the world, inspired the hope of his collections carrying at least the recommendation of *novelty* with them, should he methodize and publish them. This he at length determined to do; adding, at the same time, to his plan, a luminous and methodical, but concise detail, of the principal circumstances in

* “ ὅτι ἐγὼ γε

ἢ γαίης δυναμαὶ γλυκύτερον ἄλλο ἰδεσθαι.”—Hom. *Odyss.*

To me no fond pursuits such pleasures yield,
As the gay scenes of *Nature's* varied field.

the

the military, ecclesiastical, and civil history of the island.

He would not, however, be understood to have attempted a *complete natural history* of the Isle of Wight, in the following pages. He wishes them to be considered rather as an *index*, which some future *faunist* may improve and amplify. An *accurate* natural history of this varied and extensive district, would, of itself, form a very bulky volume; so large an one, as perhaps the abilities and leisure of no single individual would allow him to complete. The subject is so unbounded, and Nature so inexhaustible, that, even after all his labors, he must find much remained undone; and be content at last to allow the truth of the Philosopher's

sopher's" observation : "*Multum adhuc restat operis, multumque restabit ; nec ulli nato post mille secula præcludetur occasio aliquid adhuc adjiciendi.*"*

* L. A. Seneca, Epist. lxiv.

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THE
MILITARY HISTORY

OF THE
ISLE OF WIGHT.

CHAP. I.

OF THE ORIGINAL INHABITANTS OF THE
ISLE OF WIGHT.

THE imperfect light which glimmers on the early antiquities of Britain, is chiefly imparted by the writings of the Greeks and Romans.

From these sources of intelligence we collect, that the Aboriginal inhabitants of this kingdom were a tribe of the Celtæ, Galatæ, or Gauls,

B (descendants

(descendants of the Gomerians, or Phrygians) who migrated hither from the coast of Gaul.*

At what period they performed this migration, cannot, perhaps, be *exactly* ascertained; though it seems likely to have happened about one thousand years before the Christian *Æra*.†

The Kentish shore would probably be the spot which first received these wanderers, on account of its vicinity to the regions from whence they came. They would not, however, long confine themselves to this corner of the kingdom; the pressure of additional emigrants would oblige them to seek more distant habitations, and they would soon extend themselves along the Southern and Eastern coasts of the country. This would probably happen about a century after the arrival of the original tribe; at which period we may suppose the Isle of Wight received its first inhabitants.

* Tacitus, de Vit. Agric. c. xi. Strabo, lib. II. et Cæsar, lib. V.

† Whitaker's Hist. Manchester, b. I. c. i. p. 7.

These

These *Aborigines* do not seem to have been far removed from the rudest state of savage life; they were barbarous and unenlightened; having no fixed habitations; wandering from place to place; and subsisting chiefly by the labours of the chase.*

After these wild tribes had continued about five centuries in their acquisitions, another host of wanderers, to whom historians give the appellation of Belgæ, deserted their own country, *Gallia Belgica*, crossed the strait that separated them from Britain, and began to disperse themselves through the Southern shores of the kingdom. A people, who, though originally a *Celtic* tribe, were not marked by the same ferocious characteristics with their ancestors, but were more cultivated and refined; more civilized in their manners, and comfortable in their modes of life.

It is not to be supposed, however, that these new visitors would gain an immediate, or a peaceable possession of the district, to which

* Cæsar, lib. V.

accident, curiosity, or distress, had led them. Every inch of territory was obstinately disputed, and many a bloody battle fought, ere the surly Britons were driven by their successful invaders into the interior, and more retired parts of the country. At length the Belgæ succeeded, and before the period of Cæsar's arrival in Britain, the whole Southern coast was in the possession of this warlike tribe.

The Isle of Wight had, doubtless, been deeply affected by this great and general revolution; and, at least a century before the Christian Æra, had received, in the room of its sordid and barbarous inhabitants, a race of people who already understood and practised the arts of husbandry and commerce.*

In their possession, it soon began to assume a more comfortable appearance than it had hitherto exhibited; villages and towns† were built, and its ports visited by foreign traders.

* Cæsar, ut supra.

† It seems likely that a British town, or city, stood on, or near the spot of the present Carisbrook; for *Caer broc* (the probable *original* name) is a Celtic compound, signifying the city or town of yew trees.

The

The daring spirit of the Phœnician navigators, had led them to the South-Western promontories of Britain, about four centuries before the birth of our Saviour.* Here they found an article of traffic, rare and useful; and immediately entered into a commercial correspondence with the Belerian Britons, for the purchase of the *tin*, which was produced in large quantities in the islands of Cornwall. †

For upwards of two hundred years did the merchants of Tyre and Carthage preserve the monopoly of this lucrative trade, notwithstanding the constant endeavours of all the other Mediterranean powers to discover and participate it.‡ The Greeks of Marseilles, however, at

* Herodotus, Weffelingii, p. 254.

† Pliny, lib. VII. c. lvi. The Scilly Islands received their ancient appellation of *Cassiterides*, from the circumstance of their yielding this valuable metal; from the Greek, *Κασσιτερος*, *tin*.

‡ So careful were the Phœnicians in concealing the course of the vessels employed in this trade, that the captain of one of them, perceiving he was pursued by a Roman galley, in order to find out to what part he was bound, immediately *sunk his bark*, to prevent the discovery. Strabo, p. 265.

length traced out the secret, and about two centuries prior to the Christian Æra, began to avail themselves of it. From this period the Carthaginian commerce dwindled away, and the Mafsylian daily extended itself; but as the latter people were by no means such experienced seamen as the mariners of Phœnicia, and consequently less able to encounter the stormy seas of the Belerian coast, the mode of traffic was (probably at the solicitation of the Greeks, and by the consent of the Britons) somewhat changed; and the staple of tin removed from the Western extremity of the kingdom, to the Southern shore; and fixed in the Isle of Wight, or, (according to the name by which it was known to the Marseillaise) in the Island Ictis.*

The foreign traders were now no longer at the trouble of performing a tedious and dangerous voyage; but employing the *Veneti* of Gaul to transport the commodity from the new emporium to the opposite shore, they there received it, and sent it over land to Narbonne and Marseilles.†

* Diodorus Siculus, p. 847.

† Strabo, 297.

We may fairly suppose that the Isle of Wight now began to rise into consideration.—The resort of foreign merchants to its ports, would introduce a degree of civilization among its inhabitants, hitherto unknown on the Southern shores of Britain. A rapid progress would be made in all the necessary arts of life. Improvements would be adopted in the civil polity of the people; and the whole district would soon smile with wealth, comfort, and prosperity.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

OF THE ROMANS, IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

THE expeditions of Cæsar into Britain cannot be considered as amounting to a conquest of the country. His first descent was little more than a discovery of it.* The successes also which attended his second, were confined only to the South-Eastern corner of the island, and gave to the Romans neither a firm footing, nor durable authority in it. To complete the reduction of our ancestors, and bring them under the Roman yoke, was a task left for Claudius to perform; which, by himself and his lieutenants,

* “Igitur primus omnium Romanorum D. Julius cum exercitu Britanniam ingressus, quanquam prospera pugna terruerit incolas, ac litore potitus sit, potest videri ostendisse posteris, non tradidisse.” Tacitus, Vit. Agric. c. xiii.

he effected, about the year of our Lord 43.*

Vespasian was the leader who chiefly signalised himself in the subjugation of Southern Britain. During his expedition into these parts, this successful commander, it is said, was victorious in thirty pitched battles; conquered two powerful nations; and planted the Roman standard in the Isle of Wight.†

It is probable this last acquisition was made without any great difficulty, since there are no vestiges of ancient camps or intrenchments, and very few *tumuli*,‡ that lead us to apprehend the inhabitants of the island struggled hard for the preservation of their liberties. It is indeed found, that constant commercial occupations have a tendency to destroy those finer sensibilities of the soul, without which, genuine patriotism, and a warm attachment to civil liberty, cannot

* "Divus Claudius, auctor operis, transvectis legionibus auxiliisque, et assumpto in partem rerum Vespasiano."
—Tacitus, ut supra.

† Tacitus, Hist. lib. III. cap. xlv.—Suetonius, in Vit. Vesp. cap. iv.

‡ These, by the bye, may be attributed to the times of the Danish descents.

subsist. The merchants of the island, deeply engaged in the active pursuits of commerce, were altogether careless as to the *protection* under which it was carried on; whether it were the sanction of their own native laws, or the tolerating permission of a conqueror. While their traffic continued to be uninterrupted, and their accustomed gains to be received, they suffered but little concern from the idea of their most *sacred rights* being at the mercy of a foreign master. Justice, however, obliges us to confess, that the well-known lenity of the Romans to the nations which they reduced, justified, in a great degree, this confidence and unconcern on the part of the conquered. Their laws and their religion were generally uninfringed; their civil rights respected: or if any alteration were made in the one or the other, it was by the introduction of institutions that had a tendency to extend the comforts, and increase the happiness of life.*

* For a proof of this, advert to the conduct of Agricola, during his residence in Britain.—Tacitus, in Vit. Agric. c. xxi.

The Romans, having acquired the Isle of Wight, soon imposed the first badge of conquest upon it, by altering its name, which, by an easy variation, became *Veſtis*, or *Veſta*, instead of *Iſtis*. Tradition ſays, they alſo built a fortrefs on the ſite of Carifbrook, and formed it into a ſtation; and, indeed, this is very likely to have been the caſe, ſince, in their ſelection of ſites for theſe places of defence, they uſually choſe ſuch ſpots as had been the ground-plots of Britiſh cities.* But the moſt material change which the Isle of Wight experienced, was the removal of the *tin-ſtaple*, and the conſequent declenſion of its trade. *Londinium*, or London, had now become the great emporium of the kingdom, and began to aſſume that conſequence which it has ever ſince maintained. Hither the merchants of all nations flocked; and the firſt ſeeds of its preſent univerſal commerce might be ſeen, in the various articles its market

* There is not, however, at preſent, the leaſt trace of Roman architecture to be diſcerned.

exhibited, and the different people who crowded its exchange.*

But few traces of the Roman government have been discovered in the Isle of Wight, and these are confined to a small series of coins, about ten or twelve in number, of some of which the reader will find an account and engraving in the appendix.† They embrace, however, a considerable period of time, and include some of the emperors from Tiberius to Gal. Maximianus.

It is probable indeed, that a small number of the military were sufficient to preserve peace and order in this district; and as the frontiers

* "Londinium—cognomento quidem coloniae non insigne, sed copia negotiatorum et commeatum maxime celebre."—Tacitus, Annal. lib. XIV. c. xxxiii.

† Two coins are mentioned to have been found at Newport in 1759; one inscribed, TIBERIUS CÆSAR DIVI AUGUSTI FIL. AUGUSTUS.—Reverse, PONTIFEX MAXIMUS. The other had, on one side, a galley with a cross at the stern; and, on the reverse, a cippus, surmounted by a globe cross—a coin of the lower empire.—Gough's Camden, vol. I. p. 144.

of Wales, and North of Britain, required the presence of all the legionaries that could be spared, only a few soldiers would be left in the fortress of Carisbrook. This may account for the scarcity of coins discovered here ; which are always found somewhat abundantly in places where the Romans have been stationary for any time.

If we take a view of the picture, that Vectis, and its inhabitants, would probably present, during the period of the Roman government there, we shall not be astonished at their being able to support their power in it, with the slight military force which they maintained.

It was invariably the plan of these masters of the world, to bind the conquered nations to them, rather by the tie of *affection* than of *terror* ; to treat them rather as *friends* than as *slaves*. Hence, the first steps they took, after having effectually subdued them, was to introduce such arts, manufactures, and customs among them, as would administer to their amusement as well as comfort. This conduct, indeed, might be suggested

suggested rather by the *policy* of the Romans, than their humanity; since they were well aware, that modes of refinement, and habits of luxury, would more effectually enervate the mind, and extinguish that strong attachment to freedom, which burns so fiercely in the bosom of the hardy and unenlightened barbarian, than all the severities of slavery. This principle, then, they would of course adhere to, in their conduct to the inhabitants of the Isle of Wight. Such manufactures as were already in use among them, they would encourage and improve; such arts as were unknown to them, they would introduce and promote. The treasures of the soil whereon they lived, would be discovered and unfolded to them. The luxuries of life would be held up to their observation; and the bath and portico, the rich repast, and elegant attire, recommended to their use. Under these circumstances, their manners could be gradually refined into politeness; their minds illumined with science; and themselves, contented with the advantages which they possessed, utterly
for-

forgetful and regardless of the *high price* at which they were procured.

That this was the case in other parts of Britain, we know from the testimony of an excellent historian;* and that it was so in the Isle of Wight may be fairly inferred, from the peace and quietude of the district, during the whole time the Romans possessed it; a space of four hundred years, wherein we read of no disturbances on the part of the conquered, nor of severity on that of the victors.

* Tacitus. See his 'Life of Agricola;' wherein is depicted the refined policy of that commander, in thus softening and subduing the minds of the conquered Britons.

CHAP. III.

OF THE SAXONS, IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

THE peaceable, inactive state in which the Britons lived, during the continuance of the Romans among them, had, long before the departure of the latter to their own country, totally extinguished that enthusiastic love of liberty, that contempt of danger and death, which were striking features in the character of their ancestors, the ancient Britons. Debilitated by sensual indulgence, and effeminated by indolent voluptuousness, they were utterly inadequate, on the desertion of the Romans, to the protection of themselves against the tribes of barbarians, who, issuing from the mountains of Scotland, spread devastation and slaughter thro' all

all the Southern counties. Repeatedly did the unhappy Britons dispatch embassies to Rome, intreating the aid of their departed friends, who, equally pressed by the irruptions of barbarians, were obliged to concentrate their forces for the preservation of themselves. Assistance, however, was from time to time afforded them; till, at length the domestic necessities of the Romans not permitting them to impart further aid, they finally left the Britons to their own exertions, in the year of our Lord four hundred and forty-eight.*

The depredations of the Picts and Scots continually increasing, the Britons were reduced to the deepest distress; and, in the fatuity of despair, invited the Saxons, a warlike German people, to their assistance. A party of these freebooters, under their leaders, Hengist and Horfa, obeyed the summons, and landed from three vessels, about the year four hundred and forty-nine, in the Isle of Thanet.† They soon

* Bede, Eccl. Hist. lib. I. c. xiii. p. 55. Cantab. edit.

† Bede, lib. I. c. xv.

D

dispersed

dispersed the Northern depredators; but, observing the imbecility of the Britons, determined attempting the acquisition of a kingdom, which its inhabitants appeared unworthy to enjoy, and unable to defend. They soon put their determination into effect; and Hengist, after shedding oceans of blood, and committing the most horrible atrocities, seated himself on the throne of Kent, in the year of our Lord, four hundred and eighty-eight.*

* Bede, lib. I. c. xv. This venerable author, who lived at no great distance from these times, thus describes the devastations of the Saxons, and the deplorable state of the Britons. "Sic enim, et hic agente impio victore, imò disponente justo iudice, proximas quasque civitates agrosque depopulans, (ab Orientali mari usque ad Occidentale,) nullo prohibente, suum continuavit incendium, totamque prope insulæ pereuntis superficiem oblexit. Ruebant ædificia publica, simul et privata; passim sacerdotes inter altaria trucidabantur; præfules, cum populis, sine ullo respectu honoris, ferro pariter ac flammis absumebantur: nec erat qui crudeliter interemptos sepulturæ traderet. Itaque nonnulli de miserandis reliquiis, in montibus comprehensi, acervatim jugulabantur. Alii fame confecti procedentes, manus hostibus dabant pro accipiendis alimentorum subsidiiis; æternum subituri servitium, si tamen non continuo trucidarentur. Alii transmarinas regiones dolentes petebant."

Hitherto

Hitherto the Isle of Wight, lying rather remote from the scene of action, had not been agitated by the convulsions which tore the South-Eastern parts of the kingdom; but the period of its suffering similar evils was approaching. In the year four hundred and ninety-five, Cerdic, and his son Cinric, at the head of a large band of Germans, who chiefly consisted of a race of people called *Jutes*,* landed in England, excited to action by the success which had crowned the arms of his Saxon brethren here. Though their irruptions were opposed by the unconquerable spirit of Arthur, the gallant prince of the Silures; yet, aided by continual supplies from the continent, and the assistance of such tribes as had already gained a footing in England, they at length bore down all opposition, and in the year five hundred and thirty gained possession of the Isle of Wight.†

* Saxon Chronicle, p. 12. Bede, lib. I. c. xv. "De Jutarum origine sunt Cantuarii et Vectuarii, hoc est, ea gens quæ Vectam tenet insulam."

† Sax. Chron. edit. Cantab. Wheloc. p. 509.

A spirit of revenge is one of the most striking features of the savage character; and hence it is that, in all the contests of barbarous nations, the scene of blood is seldom closed, without the infliction of death or torture on the persons of the conquered. Irritated by opposition, the two Saxon leaders followed the dictates of unbridled passion, and slew most of the inhabitants whom the rage of war had spared, in cold blood, at the city of Carisbrook.*

Cerdic, the first Saxon monarch of the Isle of Wight, died, A. D. 534; and bequeathed this acquisition to his nephew Withgar,† or, according to some authors, to his two nephews, Withgar and Stufra.‡

* Bede, ut supra. "Cirtic namque, et Cinric filius ejus, congregatis ingentibus copiis apud Withland, præliati sunt, belloque devictam insulam cepêrunt, et innumerabilem hostium stragem fecêrunt apud Witgaresbrige xiii anno regni sui."—Leland, Collect. vol. II. p. 293.

† "Cerdic moriens dedit Vectam insulam Withgaro suo ex sorore nepoti, qui postea eâdem regnavit."—Leland, Collect. vol. I. p. 78.

‡ Sax. Chron. p. 18.

These ferocious chieftains filled up the measure of woes which the unhappy Britons of the Island were doomed to experience; and actually murdered all such of them as had survived the persecutions of their uncle *Cerdic*.* Withgar also gave a new appellation to Carisbrook, its most considerable town; which was now called, after his own name, *Withgarisburg*, that is, the city of Withgar.†

Thus have we seen the Isle of Wight change its inhabitants a second time. The Saxons now possessed it entirely, and, though sometimes disturbed by the transient visits of the Danes, retained the undivided possession of it for five centuries, till the conquest of the kingdom by the Normans.

We find nothing recorded relative to this district, from the massacre by Withgar to the year six hundred and sixty-one, when it was attacked and laid waste by Wulpher King of

* Sax. Chron. p. 18.

† The island itself also began to be called Wiht, or Wihtland—an easy corruption of the Roman *Vesta*, or *Vestis*.

Mercia, the son of Penda. He presented his conquest to Edelwalch, King of the South Saxons, who had been his baptismal sponsor.*

The Isle of Wight continued subject to this monarch till the year six hundred and eighty-six, when Ceadwalla, a lineal descendant of Cerdic, and King of Wesssex, slew Adelwalch, and annexed this territory to his own dominions. As the islanders were yet idolaters, this warrior, in the true spirit of the times, determined to exterminate the whole of them, and people their habitations with his own subjects. A fourth part of these devoted wretches were, however, saved, in consequence of a vow which he had made, when attempting to conquer the island, of dedicating this proportion of its inhabitants, and their lands, to the Lord. He performed this vow by conferring three hundred families (for the island only contained twelve hundred), and their property, on Bishop *Wilfred*; who committed the care of them, and the district, to a nephew of his own, a priest called *Bernwinus*.†

* Sax. Chron. Wheloc. p. 516.

† Bede, lib. IV. c. xvi.

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This anecdote is somewhat curious, as it gives us an opportunity of comparing the population of the island eleven hundred years ago, with the state of it at present; for if we allow an average of five souls to a family, we shall find that it contained, in the seventh century, not more than six thousand inhabitants; whereas a conjectural census, made about four years ago, brought its population to eighteen thousand seven hundred souls. A prodigious increase; and a striking example of what agriculture and commerce are gradually able to effect.

The Isle of Wight presents but a gloomy and disgusting appearance during the early periods of the Saxon dominion in it. Every vestige of refinement disappeared when the Britons were exterminated. Their conquerors, remarkable only for determined valor and the boundless love of freedom, neither respected, nor cultivated, the arts of peace. Commerce and husbandry were alike neglected; war and hunting alone pursued; and a cloud of ignorance, ferocity, and superstition, settled for centuries over the whole district.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

OF THE DANES, AND NORMANS, IN THE ISLE
OF WIGHT.

THE Saxons did not long retain the undisturbed possession of the Isle of Wight. A formidable enemy, towards the latter part of the ninth century, began to interrupt their quiet. This was the *Danes*, a ferocious race, who inhabited Denmark, Sweden, Jutland, and the other frozen regions of the North. The penury of their own country had early impelled these people to commit depredations on happier climes; and in consequence of these freebooting habits they had acquired considerable skill in naval tactics. Their ships, being small and light, were easily managed, and extremely swift. With these they ran up rivers and creeks; hauled

hauled them ashore; raised a slight rampart around them; and then began the work of plunder. Having effected as much havoc as they could; and collected as much booty as they were able to carry away, they immediately embarked; and, before measures could be taken to repel them, were at sea.

These ravagers had made several descents on the Southern coast, before they attempted the Isle of Wight.* At length six Danish ships, in the year eight hundred and ninety-seven, appeared off this place; the crews of which, landing, committed great depredations, and then sailed for the coast of Devonshire. The throne of England, was, however, at this time filled by a prince altogether equal to the arduous times in which he lived. *Alfred*, ever attentive to the aggrandizement of his country, and the improvement of his subjects, had observed the superiority of the Danish to the English ships, and had already constructed vessels higher, longer, and swifter, than those of his enemies. Nine of

* Sax. Chron. p. 64 et 73.

this description he dispatched to the West of England, to intercept and punish the Northern invaders. These effectually revenged the outrages which had been committed, by taking two of the Danish ships; driving three on shore; and killing a great number of their men. Such as were taken prisoners, Alfred tried as pirates at Winchester, and condemned them to be hanged.*

To particularize the various transient visits of these naval robbers to the Isle of Wight, would be tiresome and useless; as they were attended with no permanent effect, and as they all exhibit the same disgusting scene of unmerciful butchery and wasting conflagration. We pass over, therefore, the temporary distresses of the islanders, occasioned by these inroads; as well as the descent of Earl Godwin, in the year one thousand and fifty-two,† (who had been outlawed by Edward the Confessor,) and the invasion of Tosti, son of Earl Godwin, in one

* Sax. Chron. Wheloc, p. 546.

† Sax. Chron. p. 166.

thousand and sixty-six ; * that we may notice the more weighty alterations which took place in the internal state of the island by the Norman conquest.

The important battle of *Hastings*, fought on the fourteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand and sixty-six, put the crown of England, together with the dominion of the Isle of Wight, and other dependancies, into the possession of William the Norman.

It is observed, that what is acquired with ease, is, generally, dissipated with thoughtlessness ; an axiom, the truth of which is well exemplified in the extravagant munificence with which the Conqueror rewarded the barons who attended him in this expedition. His kinsman, William Fitz-Osborne, stood particularly high in his favor ; as he had long been a confidential friend ; had planned and assisted the attempt on England ; been marshal of the Norman army at the battle of Hastings, and, by his active valor, had greatly contributed to the success of that well-fought

* Florence of Worcester, p. 428. edit. 1592.

day.

day. These services the monarch rewarded by the donation of the Isle of Wight, to be held by Fitz-Osborne, as freely as William himself held the realm of England.* The Norman baron imitated the bounty of his lord, and distributed the lands, thus conferred on him, among the sub-feudatories who ranged themselves under his standard. What became, in the mean time, of the unfortunate inhabitants of the island, thus bereft of all their property, we are not informed; but it is likely many of them perished through want, as was the case in several parts of the kingdom; while others were content to lengthen a wretched existence by becoming slaves, on those lands which they had formerly held as their own.

William Fitz-Osborne, first lord of the Isle of Wight, enjoyed his acquisition only four years, being slain in battle on the continent. He was succeeded in his dignity by Roger de Breteville, Earl of Hereford, his third son.

* Chartulary of Carisbrook priory, in the possession of Sir Richard Worsley, bart.

Gratitude is so much the virtue of a cultivated mind, that it is but rarely found among the illiterate and unenlightened. Of this description was the Earl of Hereford, who, unmindful of the obligations which William had conferred on his family, and the personal favors he himself had received at his hands, entered into a conspiracy to depose him, during his absence in Normandy. Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland, however, one of the conspirators, disclosed the secret, which gave William an opportunity of checking it in the bud. Earl Roger was taken, tried, found guilty, and condemned to perpetual imprisonment. His lands were confiscated, and the Isle of Wight, amongst the rest, escheated to the crown.*

This valuable lordship was a second time bestowed on a subject, during the reign of Henry the first, who granted it to Richard de Redvers, a Norman of high descent. On his death, which occurred in the year one thousand one hundred and thirty-five, Baldwin de Redvers, his son, succeeded to the dignity. Being a

* Dugdale's Baron, vol. I. p. 67.

devoted

devoted partizan of the empress Maud, he was one of the first to rebel against the usurped authority of Stephen. He therefore fortified his castle of Exeter, put the Isle of Wight in a state of defence, and boldly defied the king. Stephen, however, proved too powerful for him; his fortress was taken; the island subdued; and himself obliged to fly the kingdom.* Shortly after this event, an accommodation took place between the contending parties, when the honors and possessions, which Baldwin had lost in the struggle, were again restored to him; and he had an opportunity of bequeathing the lordship of the Isle of Wight to his son Richard, in the year one thousand one hundred and fifty-four.†

After passing lineally through several of the Redvers family, the Isle of Wight devolved to

* Annal. Waverly, p. 154.

† In the year one thousand one hundred and seventy-seven, during the time the island was in the possession of Baldwin's nephew, Richard, a fearful miracle is said to have happened in it; a *shower of blood* of two hours continuance. "Pluit in insulâ Vectæ xiii. cal. fanguineus imber, fere per duas horas integras."—Lel. Col. vol. I. p. 226.

William

William de Vernon, a collateral branch of the same stock, anno domini one thousand one hundred and eighty-four. The oppressive gripe of King John was extended to this nobleman, out of whom he squeezed a fine of five hundred marks, on reinstating him in his castle of Plympton, and allowing him to govern his Isle of Wight tenants, by military service, and, according to the laws of the land, by judgment in his court.*

It was by this, and similar acts of harshness and injustice towards his barons, that John at length roused the spirit of this formidable class of his subjects; who, rather for the purpose of redressing their own wrongs, than emancipating the great body of the people from the oppressions under which they groaned, raised the standard of rebellion, and obliged the tyrant to sign that great charter which is the sacred foundation and bulwark of all our liberties.

It has been observed, however, by an historian, on an occasion analogous to this, that “the king

* Sir Richard Worsley's Hist. p. 54.

meant

meant not to bind himself with fetters of parchment ;” a remark extremely applicable to the ratification of *Magna Charta* : for as soon as John had pacified the furious barons, by complying with their demands, he resolved not to rest, till he again released himself from the obligations which necessity and fear had imposed upon him. Scarcely therefore had the assertors of freedom retired to their respective castles, when the king applied to the pope for absolution from the tremendous oaths by which he had ratified the great charter. He also empowered his favorites to raise bodies of mercenary soldiers, in Germany, France, and Flanders, to assist his meditated revenge on the barons, and his encroachments on the budding liberties of his subjects. During the time these crafty negotiations were on foot, the king retired into the Isle of Wight, that he might be less exposed to the observation of the public. Here he continued some time, confining himself to the society of the lower ranks of people, such as fishermen and sailors ; a conduct which raised the
the

the curiosity of all, and the merriment of many, who asserted he had turned fisherman, or merchant; or intended to betake himself to the profession of piracy.*

It is somewhat odd, indeed, the monarch should choose this spot for the place of his concealment; since it was then in the possession of William de Vernon, a baron who had been extremely active in his opposition to him. Perhaps, however, as the ratification of Magna Charta had produced a kind of specious reconciliation between John and his nobility, he apprehended he might remain with tolerable safety on the demesne of De Vernon, till his plans were sufficiently matured; aware that the secrecy of his negotiations would preclude a discovery of the intentions he harboured, and the real manner in which he was employed.

The Isle of Wight descended, through Baldwin the grandson, and Baldwin the great-grandson, of William de Vernon, to Isabella, (the daughter of the latter Baldwin,) who obtained

* Rapin's Hist. Eng. vol. I. p. 277.

possession of its lordship in the twelfth year of Edward I. This lady married William de Fortibus, Earl of Albemarle, and, surviving him, was styled Countess of Albemarle, and Lady of the Isle of Wight. In the thirteenth century, and for some centuries afterwards, it was customary for the great barons to reside upon their estates, begirt by numerous dependants and retainers, and surrounded with the barbaric magnificence of the age. The Countess Isabella, on the decease of her lord, chose Carisbrook castle for the place of her abode, where she lived for some years in almost regal splendor; administering justice; dispensing charity; and heaping donations (according to the mistaken piety of the times) on the numerous monasteries under her protection.

Upon her death-bed, it appears she was prevailed upon by the agents of Edward I. to alienate to the crown this valuable lordship, for the sum of six thousand marks. Walter, Bishop of Litchfield and Coventry, drew the deed of sale; which was executed by the countess,

ters, a few hours before her death, in the year 1293 :* not without strong suspicions of improper advantages having been taken of the weakness and fatuity which generally precede the hour of dissolution.†

* Rot. Parl. 8 et 9, Edward II.

† Dugdale, Baron. vol. I. p. 55 et 56. The smallness of the purchase-money, and other circumstances, seem to indicate something fraudulent and dishonorable in this transaction; since six thousand marks (about £4000 sterling) can never, by any reasonable mode of calculating the comparative value of money, be supposed to have been the real worth of the island in the thirteenth century. Besides, Edward himself, a few years previous to Isabella's death, had entered into a treaty with her daughter Aveline, and Edmund Crouchback her husband, to pay her no less than twenty thousand marks, together with the grant of an estate, for a simple assurance of this valuable lordship, to himself and heirs, after the decease of her mother; a treaty which was annulled by the premature death of Aveline. Gough's Camden, vol. I. p. 125.

CHAP. V.

MILITARY HISTORY OF THE ISLAND, FROM EDWARD THE FIRST TO THE PRESENT TIME.

DURING the time the Isle of Wight continued in the De Redvers family, its possessors seem to have held it by the most free and independent tenure. By the grant of Henry I. to Richard de Redvers, that baron became possessed not only of the royal demesnes within this district, but was invested also with the dominion of the whole island; holding it under
the

the crown in escuage,* at fifteen knights' fees and an half.†

A fief of such importance, of considerable magnitude, and great strength from the circumstances of its situation, was soon found, in the turbulent and unsettled state of the government at this period, to give too much consequence to a subject, and afford him too frequent opportunities of insulting and endangering regal authority. The wisdom of Edward I., therefore, determined him to make the Isle of Wight an appendage to the crown, and his policy at length gave him possession of it, in the manner mentioned in the last chapter.

* According to the customs of the feudal system, the king could demand the personal attendance of all his vassals in war. This troublesome service was, however, very soon changed into a pecuniary composition, which was aptly enough termed *escuage*, from the word *scutum*, the Latin for shield. It was a sum paid upon every knight's fee, for some reigns precarious and uncertain; being at times 20s. per knight's fee, at others, 2 marks, &c.

† One knight's fee was composed of four hydes of land; and each hyde contained one hundred *Norman acres*, which were equal to one hundred and twenty *English* ones. Arthur Agarde, p. 9.

Shortly

Shortly after Edward's purchase of it, the preparations of Philip, King of France, to invade the English coast, threw the Southern part of the kingdom into some consternation; and a descent being apprehended on the Isle of Wight, Edward took proper precautions for its defence, by giving a joint commission to the Bishop of Winchester, Adam de Gordon,* and Sir Richard de Affeton, to act as wardens of it. The French force, however, took a direction more to the

* This Adam de Gordon was a famous rebel and freebooter in the reign of Henry III., who ranged through the extensive forests of Hampshire, committing depredations on all who fell into his hands. He became at length sufficiently formidable to merit the notice of government, and Prince Edward was dispatched in pursuit of him. They met near Alton in Hampshire, and a desperate single combat immediately commenced between them; in which Edward was at length victorious, though not without great difficulty. Instead of being enraged by the opposition of Gordon, the young prince was struck with admiration of his valor; pardoned him on the spot for his former atrocities, and received him into his confidence and friendship. A curious example of the romantic spirit of the times; and a remarkable instance of generous gallantry in Edward. T. Wikes, p. 76.

Eastward;

Eastward, attacked the town of Dover, reduced it to ashes, and retired.*

The peace of the island continued unmolested till the reign of Edward III.; whose absurd claims to the crown of France involved him in a war with France, which, though brilliant with respect to temporary success, was extremely pernicious to his country in its consequences. During these hostilities, the Isle of Wight was repeatedly threatened with a descent, which induced the islanders to enter into regulations for their security, of the following nature: †

1. That there should be but three ports in the island; namely, La Riche, Shamlord, and Yarmouth.

2. That three persons should be appointed wardens of these ports, who were to prevent any one from retiring from the island, or exporting provisions from thence without licence.

3. That none but licensed boats should be permitted to pass, except the boat belonging to

* Trivetius, p. 284.

† Rot. Par. 12th Edward III.

the abbot of Quar; a boat belonging to Sir Bartholomew de Lisle, and another belonging to Robert de Pimely.

4. That several watches should be appointed, and persons nominated to superintend them and the beacons.*

Nor were these precautions useless, for in the thirteenth of Edward III., the French actually landed at the Eastern extremity of the island, in considerable force. They were, however, soon opposed by Sir John de Longford, Sir Bartholomew de Lisle, and Sir Theobald Ruffel, (who had been appointed wardens,) with a body of islanders under their command. A sharp conflict ensued, in which Sir Theobald Ruffell was slain, but the French were obliged to retire with loss to their shipping.

The situation of the island, immediately opposite to the coast of France, rendered it always liable to visits from the French, before the existence of those castles, which the prudence of Henry VIII. erected. So that there was scarcely

* Sir R. Worsley, p. 31.

a war with that kingdom from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century, in which some attempts were not made to land in the Isle of Wight. Many of the inhabitants, indeed, conscious of its exposed situation, and the constant danger in which they stood of losing their lives and fortunes, during the almost perpetual hostilities between France and England in the fourteenth century, voluntarily withdrew, with their effects, to the coast of Hampshire: and this spirit of emigration began to be so universal amongst them, that Edward III. was obliged to enforce their continuance on it, by an order to the wardens, that the lands of those who had retired from the island, and did not immediately return, should be seized, and escheat to the crown.*

G

It appears

* Brev. Regis de Morando in Inf. Vectâ, 51. Ed. III. Rex dilectis et fidel. suis, Johi. de Cavendish et sociis suis justiciariis ad placita coram nobis tenenda assignatis, sal., &c. Cum insula Vecta, quæ infra littus maris in comitatu Southamptoniæ situatur, hostibus nostris publicis maximè sit propinqua, quam etiam insulam iidem hostes multùm desiderant; et cum, infra breve tempus, appropinquare et debellare proponunt, ut audivimus, et se parant. Nos licet de avisamento concilii nostri sessiones nostras

It appears that their apprehensions were not without foundation. Early in Richard's reign, the French, with a multitude of gallies and ships, landed at the village of Rye, which they burnt to the ground, making prisoners of many of its inhabitants, and murdering the rest. They then proceeded into the heart of the island, and attacked Carisbrook-castle, whither numbers of the islanders had retired for protection. This fortress was defended by a gallant knight, Sir Hugh Tyrrel, who, by his prudence and bravery, at length obliged the invaders to retire, but not before they had extorted a contribution of one thousand marks from the inhabitants, who were

nostras in com. prædicto ad placitâ coram nobis tenenda quamdiu nostræ placuerit voluntati ordinaverimus, volumus tamen et jubemus quod omnes et singuli residentes et habitantes in insulâ Vectâ, cujuscunque fuerint statûs et conditionis, salvationi et defensionî ejusdem insulæ continuè intendant, et ibidem moram faciant et remaneant, absque eo quod ipsi seu eorum aliquis coram nobis in sessionibus nostris in comitatu prædicto comparere seu venire, vel in assisîs juratis seu recognitionibus aliquibus ibidem (quanquam nos specialiter tangant,) poni seu panellari non compellatur, aut tenentur quocunque modo vel colore quousque aliud inde duxerimus demandandum, &c. Rymer's Fœd. vol. VII. p. 147.

glady

glad, by these means, to rescue their houses and property from fire and devastation.*

The annalists have transmitted to us some other accounts of attempts by the French to surprise this place. One of these occurred in the fifth year of Henry V., when a large party of them landed, for the purpose, as they asserted, of *keeping Christmas there*: their entertainment, however, was but a sorry one; for the islanders being apprized of their arrival, suddenly attacked, and destroyed, a great number of them.

Not learning prudence from their ill success, they made another hostile visit a short time after this failure, demanding a subsidy, in the name of Richard II. and Isabella his queen. The conduct of the islanders on the occasion, marks

* In this expedition the French burned the towns of Newtown and Yarmouth. They made the following stipulation also with the inhabitants, before they agreed to retire, which is ridiculous enough, from the improbability of its being regarded, had the invaders insisted on its observance; That, should they return within twelve months after their departure, *the islanders would not attempt to interrupt their devastations.*

strongly the spirit of the times; and gives us very favorable impressions of their courage and generosity. They denied any money being due from them to the French; but added, if the latter had any inclination to try their prowess in battle, they should land without molestation, and be allowed six hours to rest and refresh themselves; after which interval, the men of the island would meet them in fair combat. The invitation was declined, however, on the part of the French, and they speedily decamped.

Henry VIII. was the first of our monarchs who adopted the plan of building forts on those parts of the British coasts which were most exposed to the insults of the French. He erected several along the shores of the Isle of Wight. Perhaps he was induced to this by some descents made by that people during his wars with Francis I., whose marine seems to have been more numerous than his own. In the thirty-sixth year of his reign, Annebout, the French admiral, landed two thousand men in three different parts of the island, with an intention to take possession of,

of, and fortify it for his master, the King of France. But a council of war having determined the impracticability of this scheme, the invaders contented themselves with burning and laying waste the villages; in which work they were busily employed, when Richard Worsley, Captain of the Island, attacked, and drove them to their ships, with the loss of the admiral, and a great part of his forces.

The powerful naval preparations of Spain against England, stimulated Elizabeth to bend her particular attention towards the increase of the British Marine. Her exertions were such, that she soon put it upon a footing sufficiently respectable to brave the power of Philip, and to gain that ascendancy which her successors have ever since maintained. Her navies were found to be a surer defence against the attempts of foreign enemies, than all the fortresses which her father had erected; and the neighbourhood of Portsmouth, that now became the rendezvous of ships of war, gave additional security to the Isle of Wight, which, from this time, does not
appear

appear to have suffered farther by French invasions.

Early in the civil wars of the last century, the Parliament became possessed of the Isle of Wight, by the removal of Jerom, Earl of Portland, (who was attached to the cause of the ill-fated Charles,) from the government of it. This nobleman had rendered himself extremely popular, during the exercise of his authority, by the affability of his manners, and his generous hospitality. Infomuch that, when the Parliament suddenly imprisoned him, upon the absurd pretences of his being a favorer of popery, and a thoughtless expender of the ammunition entrusted to his care, the chief inhabitants of the island drew up and presented the following petition to the parliament in his behalf.

“ To the honourable the knights, citizens, and burgeses, of the house of commons, assembled in parliament ;”

“ The humble petition of the deputy-lieutenants and justices of the peace, the mayors and corporations of Newport, Newtown, and
Yarmouth ;

Yarmouth; and of the rest of the inhabitants of the Isle of Wight."

"Presenting to your gracious consideration our generall grieve for the questioning of Jerom, Earl of Portland, our noble and much honoured and beloved captayne and governor."

"The principal imputation, as we are given to understand, being a jealousy of his lordship's inclination to popery."

"For ourselves, we have a pregnant testimony amongst us of his pious affection and love to the reformed religion, by a constant weekly lecture at Newport, to which his lordship is a principal benefactor. So are there on the other side, so small effects to be seen, of his lordship's discourse or practise that way tending, that amongst all the inhabitants of this isle, we have not one professed papist, or, to our knowledge, popishly affected; so rare a blessing, in these times, as we suppose cannot be boasted in any tract of ground, of this extent, in all the kingdom of England."

"Some other weake aspersions uppon his lordship, we thought not worthy of our owne regard,

regard, much lesse dare wee presume to remember them to so grave and wise a senate; wee do therefore, at once, with this petition, present our humble and gratefull acknowledgmen^t to this greate and good assembly, of the care that is taken of our weale and safety, which wee conceive can no waye be better advanced and continued uppon us, than by your just approbation of the vigilance and fidelity of our prudent and able governor.”*

The above representation being disregarded by the parliament, the most respectable gentlemen of the island seemed inclined to enforce a compliance with what they had, in vain, requested; and actually entered into a spirited declaration against the proceedings of the house of commons, stating, that it was their determination to support, with their lives and fortunes, the protestant religion, “and admit no forreyn power or forces, or new government; except his majesty, by advice of his parliament, uppon occasions that may arise, shall think itt necessary to alter it in

* Sir R. Worley's Hist. p. 110.

any particulars, for the good and safety of the kingdom;" this was subscribed with twenty-four names.*

Notwithstanding, however, the inclination of the Isle of Wight *gentry*, to befriend the cause of the unfortunate Charles, the populace, whose affections are as uncertain as worthless, instigated by the seditious spirit of Moses Read, Mayor of Newport, declared in favor of the parliament; and a representation was transmitted to this assembly, of great danger accruing to the state, from the Countess of Portland being allowed to continue in Carisbrooke castle, and Col. Brett retaining the custody of it. In consequence of this, orders were sent to Read, to seize immediately on this fortress; and to secure the temporary governor, and the Earl of Portland's lady, together with her five children, and other relatives, who had sheltered themselves in it. The rebel mayor marched, therefore, with the Newport Militia, and a body of four hundred

* Sir R. Worley, p. 115: the declaration bears date, August 8th, 1642.

failors, to attack the garrison of Carisbrooke, which, at that time, did not consist of more than twenty men. We blush for the degeneracy of our kind, when we relate, that Harby, the curate of Newport, who was bound to the Earl of Portland by the strongest ties of gratitude, prostituted his sacred office, by exhorting, from the pulpit, this rebellious band, to sweep from the earth the unfortunate Countess, with her innocent offspring.

This lady, however, animated by that unbending fortitude which springs from conscious rectitude, was no ways distressed at the prodigious disproportion between the numbers of her assailants and defenders. She knew it was impossible for her little garrison long to resist the enemy's attacks, but, at the same time, was determined not to surrender it, without assurance of receiving the most honorable terms of capitulation. She roused the spirits of the desponding soldiers, by her animating exhortations; and added the force of example to the persuasion of eloquence. With a lighted match in her hand, she

she walked deliberately to one of the bastions, declaring she would discharge the first cannon at the foe. Read, and his party, unwilling perhaps to provoke the dangerous efforts of despair, offered terms of capitulation, which, after some negotiations, were accepted, and the castle was surrendered on the following stipulations; That the warder of the castle, Col. Brett, together with his servants, and the garrison, should be allowed the freedom of the island, under the restriction of their forbearing to visit Portsmouth, which Goring at that time held for Charles. That the countess, with her family and friends, should be allowed to continue her residence in the castle, till such time as the parliament had declared its pleasure in that respect. Her stay here was not long protracted; the house of commons, with invidious expedition, immediately transmitted an order for her to remove from the island, within two days after the receipt of it. Yet such was the height to which the spirit of fanaticism had already arisen, in this part of England, that not a single islander could be

found, who would undertake to convey to the opposite shore, one, whose consort had been suspected of favoring popery ; and it is probable the unfortunate countess might have been *compelled* to neglect the orders of the council, had not the seamen of a trading vessel, with that generous compassion which characterizes the maritime profession, taken her and her family on board their ship, and conveyed them safely to the coast of Hampshire.

From this period, the history of the Isle of Wight ceases to afford further military anecdote. On the Earl of Pembroke succeeding Col. Brett, its inhabitants quietly sunk under the control of the parliament ; and witnessed, without an effort to prevent it, the unnatural imprisonment of their anointed sovereign, in Carisbrook castle, and the forcible abduction of him from thence to the scaffold at Whitehall. On the restoration of his son, they as patiently and willingly received the governor appointed by the court, Thomas, Lord Culpeper ; and, during the whole troublesome period of the civil war, occupied entirely
by

by their agricultural and commercial pursuits, kept the "noiseless tenor of their way;" without being involved in those convulsions, which shook the peace of almost every other part of the kingdom.*

* "The quiet they enjoyed invited many from the neighbouring counties to retire hither; which raised the rents of the farms in the proportion of twenty pounds in the hundred. That the rise originated from this cause only, appeared by their sinking again, soon after the Restoration."—Sir R. Worsley's Hist. Isle of Wight, p. 136.

CHAP. VI.

THE ANCIENT AND PRESENT DEFENCE OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

DURING the continuance of the Roman government in Britain, the universal empire of that people precluded the necessity of keeping a military force in the island, to defend it from external attacks. The few legionaries who dwelt in the station at Carisbrook, were placed there for the purpose of preserving internal peace and order; which, from the causes mentioned in a preceding chapter, were easily maintained throughout the district. Not but that the islanders had it in their power to be troublesome to their conquerors, provided their inclination had been such; for although Claudius, on his subduing the Southern parts of Britain, deprived,
for

for a time, its inhabitants of their arms ; yet these were again restored, as soon as their minds were reconciled to the dominion of the Roman power.*

The excellent regulations of Alfred, with whom originated the idea of a national militia,† enabled the Isle of Wight to repel the repeated descents of the Danes ; nor could they effect any serious impressions on it, so long as those regulations were properly observed.

From the time that William Fitz-Osborne received the absolute dominion of the Isle of Wight, the defence of it rested entirely with itself. Being totally distinct from the crown, it was not to expect the interference of that power, in case of foreign assaults. But the feudal system provided ample resources for its protection. According to the spirit of this mingled mass of wisdom and absurdity, each land-holder was a soldier ; and bound to attend the lord of the fee in his wars. A principle that certainly

* Dio. p. 959.

† Afferius de Vit. Ælfredi, p. 6.

was not without its advantages, whilst strictly adhered to; since it furnished, on every emergency, a band of warriors who were bound by the strong tie of *interest*, as well as the sacred obligation of oaths, to exert every effort in the field of battle.

Although Richard de Redvers did not receive the Isle of Wight on such independent and unfettered terms, as William Fitz-Osborne had it from the Norman on; yet, with respect to its defence, he alone was to provide the means of that. And we find, accordingly, that so long as it continued in his family, a supply of seventy-six men at arms was always drawn from Devonshire, (of which county the Redvers family were earls,) whenever the prospect of external hostility rendered such succour necessary for the islanders.*

As soon, however, as Edward I. was possessed of it, the means of its security became of course the care of the crown. The following list of men at arms, furnished to this monarch, for its defence,

* Inq. Ann. 16mo Ed. III.

will display the nature and the sources of its protection at this time :

	MEN.
From the Bishop of Salisbury - - -	5
From the Abbot of Glastonbury - - -	7
From John Mandut - - -	1
From Emmeline Longespey - - -	1
From the Abbot of Stanley - - -	2
From Beatrice de Winterhall - - -	1
From the Abbot of Gloucester - - -	1
From the Abbess of Godeflow - - -	1
From Robert de Keynis - - -	1
From the Abbot of Malmesbury - - -	3
From the Abbot of Cirencester - - -	2
From Thomas Warblington - - -	1
From the Prior of Hurle - - -	1
From Thomas de Ambrosbury - - -	1
From the Abbot of Abyngdon - - -	3
From Elia Molendinari - - -	1
From John Dandele - - -	1
From William Pagham - - -	1
From Richard Winton - - -	1
From Peter Coudray - - -	1
From Hugh Taylor - - -	1
From the Abbot of Romele - - -	1
From Lucia de Grey - - -	1

I

From

	MEN.
From the Abbot of Walton - - -	1
From the Preceptor of Shalford - - -	1
From the Preceptor of Conele - - -	1
From Nicholas Burden - - -	1
From Roger de St. Martin - - -	1
From Mary the king's daughter, a nun at Ambresbury - - -	2
From the Bishop of Worcester - - -	1
From Hamon de Parles - - -	1
From the Bishop of Bath and Wells -	1
From Robert Kingborne, for William de Coates	1
John Grey, for Walter Skydemour - -	1
John Blaine, for the Abbot of Thukesburgh -	1
Richard Selby, for the Hundred of Herewalkeden	1
Henry Hemenhall, for Chipham and Malsbury	1
Walter Cornifey, for the Hundred of Warham	1
John Carrile, for Chalk and Domerham -	1
Geoffry de Calne, for Heightsbury - -	1
From Roger de Coke, for Westbury - -	1
From the Abbess of Whorwell - - -	1
From Hugh Peverell - - -	1
From William Ires, for the Abb. of Shafton	1
From Maurice de Wileb, for Matthew Fitz John	1
From — Sterne - - -	1
From the Community of Wilts - - -	6
From Alife de Bavent - - -	1

From

From the Prior of —————	-	-	-	MEN. 1
From Adam de Breton	-	-	-	1
*From Richard de la Rivere	-	-	-	1
				—
In all—Men at Arms	-	-	-	73
				—

Exclusive of this band of auxiliaries, every free land-holder, to the amount of twenty pounds per annum, was obligated by his tenure to find one horseman, completely armed and accoutred, at his own proper charges, in all times of actual danger. It appears also, that for the better security of the island against surprizes, various beacons and watches were established in different parts, at which constant duty was performed both night and day. Of these there were thirteen in the Eastern division of the island, and sixteen in the Western division; and each of them, (for the most part) had four men to watch at it during the night, and two by day.† To these means of

* Prynn on the 4th Institute, p. 211.

† Inquisitio anno 18. Edw. II. num. 216. in Tur. Lond. N. B. The island, from very early antiquity

of defence were added one hundred flingers and bowmen sent by the king, and three hundred by the city of London.*

Early in the reign of Edward III. we find the number of forces furnished by the land-holders of the island, amounted to fifty-four men at arms, and one hundred and forty-two bowmen, who were produced by the persons, and in the proportions which follow :

	ARM.	SAG.
The Abbot of Quarr - - -	4	0
The Lord of Woodyton - - -	6	0
The Abbess (of Laycock) for Sherwell -	3	2
The Prior of Christchurch - - -	2	2
The Lord of Yaverland - - -	2	2
The Lord of Apuldurcomb - - -	2	2
The Lord of Kingston - - -	1	0
The Lord of Wonston - - -	1	0

quity, has been divided into two Hundreds, called East and West Medine.—They receive these names from their relative situations to the river *Medina*, which like most other of our rivers, has preserved its British appellation; *Med* in the Celtic signifying water, and *in* being the British plural.

* Inquis. 16. anno Ed. III. in Tur. Lond,

				ARM.	SAG.
The Lord of Standen and Wode	-	-	-	1	0
The Manor of Whitefield	-	-	-	1	0
The Manor of Stenbury	-	-	-	1	0
The Lord of Niton and Chale	-	-	-	0	1
The Manor of Bottebridge	-	-	-	0	1
The Prior of St. Helens	-	-	-	0	1
The Prior of Burton	-	-	-	0	2
The Lord of Alverfton	-	-	-	0	2
The Manor of Milton	-	-	-	0	3
The Vavafor	-	-	-	0	2
John Malterfon, for Wood Anfterborn	}				3
(Osborne) and Chilling Wood					
The Manor of Pagham	-	-	-	0	2
The Manor of Nettleston	-	-	-	0	2
The Abbot of Beaulieu	-	-	-	0	2
John Wyvill	-	-	-	0	4
John Norreys	-	-	-	0	1
Edward Barnaby	-	-	-	0	1
The Manor of Nunwell	-	-	-	0	2
Richard de Hale	-	-	-	0	2
Ralf Overton, for Horringford	-	-	-	0	1
Thomas Hacket	-	-	-	0	1
William Urry	-	-	-	0	1
The Lady Mary Buteler, for Hale	-	-	-	0	1
The Prior of Portsmouth	-	-	-	0	2
Geoffry Rouelle	-	-	-	0	2

The

	ARM.	SAG.
The Manor of Bathingborne - - - - -	0	2
John Palmer of Wotton, and John Stone	0	1
Roger Baker - - - - -	0	1
William Stouer - - - - -	0	1
Isabell Keynis, for Niton - - - - -	0	2
John Waite - - - - -	0	1
Henry Pedder, for Westbrooke - - - - -	0	1
Sir Theobald Gorges, for Chillingwood -	0	1
The Tenant of ——— - - - - -	0	1
Robert Syngdone - - - - -	0	1
Sir John de Kyngston, for Lucelo and } Priffloe - - - - - }	0	1

The Churches of East Medine :

The Church of Brading - - - - -	2	0
Yaverland - - - - -	0	1
Newchurch - - - - -	2	0
Arreton - - - - -	1	3
Whippingham - - - - -	0	2
Niton - - - - -	0	1
Benfede - - - - -	0	1
Shentlyn - - - - -	0	1
Bonechurch - - - - -	0	1
Wootton - - - - -	0	1
Wathe - - - - -	0	1
Appulderford - - - - -	0	1
Stownam, or Standen - - - - -	0	1

The

			ARM.	SAG.
The Church of Knighton	-	-	0	1
Alverston	-	-	0	1
The Vicar of Brading	-	-	0	1
Arreton	-	-	0	1
Goddefhill	-	-	0	1
The Chapel of St. Edmund, at Wootton			0	1

The West Medine:

The Prior of Carisbrooke	-	-	6	0
The Procurator of Lyra	-	-	1	2
Giles Beauchamp, for Freshwater	-	-	2	0
Gilbert de Spencer	-	-	1	2
The Lord of Affeton	-	-	1	0
The Erle of Salisbury	-	-	3	2
Sir John de Kingston	-	-	1	2
John de Compton	-	-	0	2
Sir Thomas Langford	-	-	0	3
The Manors of Gatcomb, Whitwell, Caulborn, and Mersten	-	-	3	0
Thomas Rale	-	-	1	0
Sr. Lawrence de St. Martin	-	-	1	1
The Lord of Motteston	-	-	1	0
Ralph de Woolverton	-	-	0	2
Nicholas de Woolverton	-	-	0	1
Ralf Diction and Tho. Hacket, for Hatherfield			0	2
Sr. John Tychborn	-	-	0	2
				Thomas

	ARM.	SAG.
Thomas le Wayte - - - -	9	2
William Passelew and Geoffry Ronele	0	2
John Berle - - - -	0	2
John Fauterby - - - -	0	2
Lady Isabella Hunston - - - -	0	2
Henry Tailour - - - -	0	1
The Abbess of Laycock - - - -	0	1
Park - - - -	0	2
Lawrence Ruffel - - - -	0	3

The Churches of the West Medine :

The Church of Freshwater - - - -	1	0
Schaldeflet - - - -	1	0
Caulborn - - - -	1	0
Brixton - - - -	1	2
Shorewell - - - -	0	2
Gatecomb - - - -	0	3
Chale - - - -	0	2
Motteston - - - -	0	2
Broke - - - -	0	1
Lemerston - - - -	0	1
Kingston - - - -	0	1
Yarmouth - - - -	0	1
The Vicar of Shorewell - - - -	0	2
Shaldeflet - - - -	0	2
Thorley - - - -	0	1

The

	ARM.	SAG.
The Vicar of Carebrook - -	0	2
The Prior of Christchurch, who is } Rector of Thorley*	0	1

In all, fifty-four men at arms, and one hundred and forty-two bowmen. These, however, by no means constituted the whole force of the island at this period, since a kind of *general militia* was furnished by the several parishes and tythings, in cases of external assault, which was distributed into companies, and commanded by such lords of manors as were of the most approved military skill: and if these resources were insufficient for its protection, the warden had still a discretionary power vested in him, of levying new forces throughout the island, and of impressing men for its defence from the County of Southampton.†

To these regulations for its safety, the Isle of Wight continued subject for the space of many

* Sir R. Worley's Hist. Isle of Wight, Append. No. II.

† Rot. Franc. 26. Ed. III. m. 13.

years, till Henry VIII. incensed by some recent descents of the French on the British coast, adopted the plan of building a number of forts and block-houses on the parts most exposed to their insults. Those erected at this time, on the island, were the following :*

Sandown Fort, situated at the bottom of a bay of that name, in the South-eastern part of the island.†

Yarmouth Castle, intended to defend the entrance of the river *Yar*,‡ on the north-western part.

Worley's Tower, (long since demolished) built on a point of land, about a mile to the West of Yarmouth.

* These were all built about the 36th Hen. VIII.

† This fortress is still kept in repair, and has the following establishment :—A captain, twelve warders, one master gunner, three other gunners. It is a regular quadrilateral building ; having a bastion at each angle, and surrounded with a wet ditch.

‡ *Yar*, is a corruption of *yr*, a British appellative for water. The establishment of this castle is still preserved ; though its uses have long since ceased. It has a captain, one master gunner, and five other gunners.

West

West Cowes Castle, erected on the West side of the river Medina, on the North shore of the island, and *East Cowes Castle*, on the other side of the same river, of which no vestige now remains.*

The establishment of Sandham and West-Cowes castles, will appear from the underwritten account of fees paid to their respective garrisons:

Sandham Castle, Sandham Bay.

PER DIEM.

4s. Captain	}	Fee	£.	s.	d.
2s. Under ditto					
6d. Soldiers, thirteen					
8d. Porters, one					
8d. Master Gunner					
6d. Other Gunners, seven	}				
			363	6	8

West - Cowes Fortrefs.

1s. Captain	}	Fee	£.	s.	d.
6d. Soldiers, two					
8d. Porter, one					
6d. Gunners, six					
			103	8	4†

* West Cowes castle is also utterly useless; but still has a captain, one master gunner, and five other gunners.

† Sir R. Worsley's Hist. Append. No. XXXVI.

The nature and proportions of the military stores kept in the different castles of the island, at the period of Henry's death, are still preserved to us, and may be deemed sufficiently curious to be laid before the reader.

*The Isle of Wight.**

The Castell at Yarmouth. } Ordenaunce, artillery, and
} other munycions of warre remaynyng at the saide castell in the custody and chardge of Richard Edwall, captaine there, the 26th. of Decembre, anno regni regis nunc Edwardi sexti primo.

Curtall Cannon of Brasse furnyshed	Oone
Demy Culveryne of Brasse furnyshed	Oone
Demy Culveryne of caste Irone furnyshed	Oone
Fowlers of Irone with 4 chambers stocks broken	ij ^o .
Sacres of Caste Irone furnyshed	ij ^o .

* Extracted from a MS. formerly in the possession of Gustavus Brander, Esq. (now in the British Museum), being "An inventory of the plate, jewells, ordenaunce, &c. of Henry VIII." dated 14th September, 1547.

Doble barces of yrone with iiij } chambers - - -	ij ^o .
Single bafes of yrone with iiij chambers	ij ^o .
Demy culveryne of caſte yrone -	Oone broken.
Cannon ſhot of yrone - -	xv.
Demy culveryne Shott of yrone -	xlviij.
Sacre ſhotte of yrone - -	c.
Fowler ſhotte of ſtone - -	l ^{ti} .
Shotte of doble bafes of diece and lead	l ^{ti} .
Shott of ſingle bafes - -	xxx ^{ti} .
Serpentyne powder -	{ viij di. bar. iiij doble.
Hagbuttes furnyſhed - -	xix.
Corne Powder for the ſame -	di ^o . Bar.
Bowes - - - -	cxl ^{ti} .
Sheiffs of Arrows - - -	ccxlviiij.
Bowſtrings oone firkyne, conteyning	ij Groſſe.
Billes - - - -	ccxxiiij.

The Block-houſe at Sharpnode within the ſaid Iſle of Wight, in the charge of Nicholas Cheke.

Demy Culveryns of Braſſe furnyſhed	Oone
Sacres of Braſſe furnyſhed - -	Oone
Demy culveryne ſhotte of yrone -	xxj.
	Sacre

Sacre Shotte of yrone	-	-	xxiiij.
Serpentyne powder	-	-	Oone doble Bar.

The Castell of Carysbrooke. } Ordenaunce, artyllery, and
 other munycions of warre re-
 mayninge at the said Castell in the custody and
 charge of Richard Worsley gentilman, Captayne
 of the said isle.

Slynges of yrone furnyshed	-	-	ij ^o .
Fowler of yrone furnyshed	-	-	Oone.
Doble bassys of yron furnyshed	-	-	ij ^o .
Hoole culveryne shotte	-	-	xxx ^{ti} .
Demy Cannon Shotte	-	-	l ^{ti} .
Yron for divers peices	-	-	xxx ^{ti} .
Demy culveryne Shotte of yrone	-	-	xxx ^{ti} .
Sacre shotte of Yrone	-	-	cciiij.
Fawcon shotte of yrone	-	-	clx ^{ti} .
Doble basis shotte	-	-	x ^{ti} .
Serpentyne powder	-	-	{ xxiiij doble bar. iiij. firke.
Hagbuttes furnyshed, lacking xx flasks and xx touch-boxes	{		cxl.
Coilles of Lyntte	-	-	DC.
Corne Powder	-	-	iiij doble bar.

Chestes

Chestes of Arrowes	-	-	lix.
Chestes of Bowes	-	-	xxi.
Bow strings	-	-	iiij Bar.
Morispickes	-	-	D.
Javelyns	-	-	c. ^{xx} iiij. iiiij.
Billes	-	-	dccl.

The Castell of Sandham baye.

Ordenaunce, artillery, and other munycions of warre remaynyng at the said castell in the custody and charge of Peter Smythe Cap-
tayne there.

Demy culveryns of brasse furnyshed	-	Oone.
Saker of brasse furnyshed	-	Oone.
Fawcone of brasse furnyshed	-	Oone.
Porte pieces of yrone with ii cham- bers furnyshed	} }	Oone.
Hoole flynges of yrone furnyshed	-	Oone.
Demy flynges of yrone with vi chambers	} }	v.
Quarter Slynge of yrone with oone chamber	} }	Oone.
Demy Culveryn shotte of yrone	-	^{xx} iiij.
Demy culveryn shotte of dice and lead	-	xv.
		Hollow

Hollow shottes for wild fier	-	-	xij.
Sacre shotte of yrone	-	-	lxij.
Sacre shotte of Dice and Leade	-	-	^{xx} iiij.xiiij.
Fawcon shotte of yrone	-	-	xxxvj.
Fawcon shotte of Dice and leade	-	-	cxvj.
Shotte of stone for port pieces	-	-	xxiiij.
Cases of haile shotte for the same	-	-	xxviiij.
Slynge shotte of Dice and leade	-	-	xij.
Demy flyng shotte of Dice and Leade			c.
Quarter flyng shotte of dice and leade			xlvj.
Serpentyne powder	-	{	iiij doble bar. j firk.
Hagbushes wanting flasks and touch-boxes		}	lxxviiij.
Corne powder	-	-	Oone firk.
Bowes	-	-	Oone cheft.
Sheiff Arrowes	-	-	Oone cheft.
Pickes	-	-	cl.
Billes	-	-	cxx.

The Castell at the Weste Cowe.

Ordenaunce, artillery, and other munycions of Warre remaynyng in the said castell in the charge or custody of Robert Raymonde Cap-
tayne.

The

The Barbycan.

Curtoll cannon of Brasse furnyshed -	Oone
Bastard Culveryne of Brasse furnyshed	Oone
Porte pieces of yrone furnyshed with iiij chambers	} ij.
Three Quarter Slynge with ij cham- bers	} Oone.
Porte pieces not able to ferve -	Oone.
Cannon Shotte of yrone -	xvij.
Bastard Culveryn Shotte of yrone -	xiiij.
Bastard Culveryn Shotte of leade -	lvj.
Shotte for port pieces of Stone -	xxx.
Slinge Shotte of Irone -	xxxij.

The Weste Wyng.

Doble bafes with ij chambers not hable to ferve	} Oone.
Single bafes with iiij chambers not hable to ferve	} ij.

The Easte Winge.

Doble bafes with iiij chambers not hable to ferve	} ij.
--	-------

The mayne Towre.

Doble bafes with ii chambers furnyshed	Oone.
Three quarter Slings with ii chambers apiece, whereof oone is not hable to ferve	} iiij.
Single Bafes with viij chambers not hable to ferve	
Three quarter sling shott of leade	- cxlvj.
Shotte for doble bafes	- lxiiij.
Serpentyne Powder	- } j doble Bar. ij fir.
Hagbutts not hable to ferve	- x.
Corne Powder	- iiiij lb.
Bowes	- xix.
Chefts of Arrowes	- xxxij.
Pickes	- xxij.
Billes	- xx.

In the year 1558, a very confiderable addition was made to the means of defence in the Isle of Wight, by the introduction of *fire arms* there. Richard Worsley, Esq. who was that year reinstated in his office of captain of the island, received orders to put the common

mon musket of the times into the hands of the militia, and to settle an armourer at Carisbrooke castle, for the purpose of fabricating them. These directions were executed, and the soldiers received their new arms; which although they were the rude and clumsy harquebusses of the sixteenth century, with the match lock, and rest, yet they might be considered as much more formidable instruments of destruction than the weapons before in use amongst them.*

It was in consequence of these new regulations, and the vigilant care with which they were enforced, that the militia of the Isle of Wight wore a very respectable appearance towards the close of the sixteenth century. Camden speaks of the inhabitants at that time, as

* About the same time, the islanders voluntarily put themselves to the trouble and expence of providing a train of artillery for their defence. Each parish found one, which was either kept in a small house built for the purpose, or in some part of the church. About eighteen of these remain. The carriages and ammunition were provided at the expence of the parishes, and particular farms were charged with the duty of finding horses to draw them. Sir R. Worsley, p. 41.

excelling greatly in military skill. "They are brave and courageous," says he, "and so constantly trained by the captain of the island, as to understand completely all the operations of war. They excel in firing at a mark; can keep their ranks; march compact and orderly; or extend their files if need be; are inured to hardship, fatigue, heat and dust, and can perform every office of a soldier. The island," he continues, "can raise four thousand soldiers of its own; and can have, at a short notice, three thousand well disciplined men from Hampshire, and two thousand from Wiltshire.*"

In the year 1625, the island could bring into the field, two thousand and twenty effective men; the following statement shews in what manner they were armed, and how divided into companies.

A true Noate of the Strenght of the island, taken by Sir John Oglander, listennant, the 12th of May 1625, and by him delivered to the Counsell.

* Cam. Brit. Edit. 1607.

In Sir John Oglander's Band.

Officers	-	-	-	7
Musketieres	-	-	-	60
Corflettes	-	-	-	21
Bare Pickes	-	-	-	9
Soom	-	-	-	97

In Sir Edward Dennis Bande.

Officers	-	-	-	10
Muskettes	-	-	-	103
Corflettes	-	-	-	13
Bare Pickes	-	-	-	23
Men unarmed	-	-	-	61
Som	-	-	-	210

Appeldorcoombe Bande.

Officers	-	-	-	9
Muskettes	-	-	-	150
Corflettes	-	-	-	25
Bare Pickes	-	-	-	37
Men unarmed	-	-	-	40
Som	-	-	-	261

Mr. Dillington's Band.

Officers	-	-	-	12
Muskettes	-	-	-	60
Corflettes	-	-	-	

Corflettes	-	-	-	20
Bare Pickes	-	-	-	15
Men unarmed	-	-	-	15
Som	-	-	-	122

Sir John Richardes Bande.

Officers	-	-	-	6
Muskettes	-	-	-	61
Corflettes	-	-	-	14
Bare Pickes and men unarmed	-	-	-	28
Som	-	-	-	109

Mr. Cheekes Band.

Officers	-	-	-	7
Muskettes	-	-	-	113
Corflettes	-	-	-	21
Bare Pickes	-	-	-	13
Som	-	-	-	154

Sir William Meux.

Officers	-	-	-	12
Muskettes	-	-	-	156
Collivors	-	-	-	29
Corflettes	-	-	-	44
Men unarmed	-	-	-	20
Som	-	-	-	261

Mr.

Mr. Leyghe's Band.

Officers	-	-	-	-	6
Muskettes	-	-	-	-	63
Corflettes	-	-	-	-	16
Bare Pickes	-	-	-	-	10
Som	-	-	-	-	95

Mr. Borman's Band.

Officers	-	-	-	-	13
Muskettes	-	-	-	-	65
Corflettes	-	-	-	-	17
Bare Pickes	-	-	-	-	20
Som	-	-	-	-	115

Mr. Hobson's Band.

Officers	-	-	-	-	18
Muskettes	-	-	-	-	83
Corflettes	-	-	-	-	38
Men unarmed	-	-	-	-	31
Som	-	-	-	-	170

Mr. Urrie's Band.

Officers	-	-	-	-	11
Muskettes	-	-	-	-	80
					Corflettes

Corflettes	-	-	-	22
Bare Pickes	-	-	-	9
Soom	-	-	-	122

Nuport Band.

Officers	-	-	-	22
Muskettes	-	-	-	94
Collivors	-	-	-	4
Corflettes	-	-	-	12
Bare pickes	-	-	-	32
Holberdes	-	-	-	10
Men unarmed	-	-	-	130
Som	-	-	-	304

Muskettes	-	-	-	1088
Collivors	-	-	-	33
Corflettes	-	-	-	263
Bare Pickes	-	-	-	196
Holberdes	-	-	-	10
Men unarmed	-	-	-	297
Officers	-	-	-	133

Som totoll of all the able
men within the Island is. } 2020

Since they arr all armed.*

* Sir Richard Worsley's Hift. Append. No. XIV.

Three

Three years after the return of this statement, the above force was new-modelled, and formed into sixteen companies, which were, in the year 1638, commanded and appointed to the stations as under.

The Watches and Wardes that ar now kept in our Island. Sep. 20. 1638.

East Meden.

Captain Rice	{	At St. Caterons, a Ward with 2 Men.
		On the Hatton Nyghtonfyld, a watch with 2 men.
Sir Ed. Dennys	{	A Watch at Lanes, 2 Men.
		A Ward at Roxall Down.
Sir J. Oglander	{	Ashen Down, a Ward one Man and a Watch 2 Men.
		At St. Helen's poynt, a watch, 2 men.
Sir R. Dillington	{	On Knyghton, a Watch, 2 Men.
		At Ryde, a Watch, 2 men.
Sir Hen. Worfeley	{	At Apeldercombe, a watch 2 men
		At Crippe at Nyghton, a watch, 2 men.

M

Cap.

Cap. Cheeke	{ At St. George's Down, a Watch 2 men.
Cap. Baskett	{ On Binbridge Down, a ward, one Man, and a Watch, 2 men.
Sir Wm. Lislle	{ At East Cowes, Wootton poynt, and at Fischowfe, a Watch, 2 men a peece.

West Meden.

Mr. Mewx	{ At Ramse Down, a watch 2 men. At Chale Down, a watch, 2 men.
Sir John Leygh	{ At Lardon Down, a watch, 2 men. At Atherfylde, a watch, 2 men.
Cap. Urry	{ On Hearberoe Down, a Ward, 2 Men On the seae shore at Brixton, a watch, 2 men.
Cap. Harvy	{ On Avington Downe, a Watch, 2 Men. At Northwood, a Watch, 2 Men, On Gatecombe Downe, a watch, 2 Men.
Cap. Booreman	{ On Freschewaltor Downe, a ward and Watch, two men apeece. On Motson Downe, a Watch, 2 Men.

Cap.

Cap. Hobson At Hamstede, a Watch, 2 Men.
 Newport 2 Com- } They only watch in the towne.
 panies.

The internal strength of the island, however, seems to have fallen off considerably in the course of a very few years after this arrangement of its militia; for on the appointment of the Earl of Pembroke to the government of it, in 1642, a representation of its state was transmitted by Sir John Dingley (who had been deputy-governor) to that nobleman, which affirms that the train-bands were very much weakened and decayed, and if there were not a speedy course taken, would be daily worse and worse; on account of the lords of the manors taking their copyholds into their own hands as quickly as they fell in; and the rich farmers laying together all the farms they could put their hands upon; causes which occasioned a sensible decrease in the population and strength of the island.

Further regulations were adopted soon after the above representation, and in the year 1651

a set of instructions was delivered to the militia of the island, of a very sensible nature; comprizing a long list of precautions to be taken, for the prevention of an enemy's landing, or for resisting him if he did land. A copy of these instructions was sent to every captain, with orders to have them read at the head of his company whenever it was mustered.*

Immediately on the restoration of Charles the Second, Lord Culpeper was appointed governor of the island; whose inattention with respect to the means of its defence, and arbitrary proceedings in civil matters, induced the inhabitants to present a petition to the king for his removal; in which they state, that the ancient magazines and stores of the island, were neither so full, nor in so good repair as in former times; nor the militia in such a condition as was consistent with the safety of the place.

In the lord chancellor's answer to this petition, it is promised, that Lord Culpeper should

* Sir R. Worsley's Append. No. XVIII.

be forthwith dispatched to the island to regulate its militia, and order matters for its better security. This, however, he had not an opportunity of doing, as he shortly after resigned his post of governor; in which he was succeeded by Sir Robert Holmes.

In the year 1757 the present militia of the Isle of Wight was first raised; and drawn out, embodied, and formed into an independent company in 1770. It consists of sixty men, and is commanded by a captain under the governor.

This island has also lately evinced its patriotism, in the formation of a cavalry corps, consisting of fifty men (officers included) denominated *The Loyal Isle of Wight Yeomanry Cavalry*; a corps raised for the repulsion of foreign attack, and the suppression of domestic confusion.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHILIP H. KATZ

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THE
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY
OF THE
ISLE OF WIGHT.

CHAP. I.

OF THE ANCIENT RELIGION OF THE ISLE OF
WIGHT, AND THE INTRODUCTION OF
CHRISTIANITY THERE.

DRUIDISM was the ancient religion of the Isle of Wight. Both its original Celtic inhabitants, and their Belgic successors, professed this mode of worship.

The Druid doctrine, in its primeval state, was sublime and simple. It taught the existence of one eternal, almighty God, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, to whom all things were subject and obedient.* It taught also

* *Regnator omnium DEUS, cætera subiecta atque parentia.*—Tacit.

the

the immortality of the soul; that great principle, which is the most effectual spur to virtue, the greatest check to vice, and happiest antidote to despair.† It further inculcated, the belief of a future state, in which the spirits of the departed were to be cloathed with incorruptible bodies, unfading youth, and perpetual beauty; and invited its followers to rectitude in peace, and gallantry in war, by prospects of an unceasing repetition of those pleasures (though infinitely exalted and refined), in the island of the West,* which they had most esteemed and delighted in, during their residence on earth.‡

† Ενισχύει γὰρ παρ' αὐτοῖς ὁ Πυθαγόρου λόγος, ὅτι τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀθανάτους εἶναι συνέβηκε. Diod. Sic. lib. V.

Imprimis hoc volunt persuadere, non interire animas. —Cæf. lib. VI. c. xiv.

* Celebratæ illæ beatorum insulæ dicuntur esse in Occidentali oceano.—Eustathius ad Dion. Perieg.

‡ Vobis auctoribus, umbræ,
Non tacitas Erebi sedes, Ditisque profundi
Pallida Regna petunt; regit idem spiritus artus
Orbe alio: longæ (canitis si cognita) vitæ
Mors media est.

Lucani Pharf. lib. I.

Thus

Thus simple and noble was the Druidical religion originally; before the ignorance, the errors, and the fears of the multitude, had corrupted and distorted its philosophical tenets. The policy of its ministers, the Druids, however, involved these truths in wilful obscurity, and in order to preserve their empire over the public mind, they wrapped themselves and their doctrine in the mantle of mystery. This conduct naturally increased their own importance and the veneration of their followers; but at the same time, left the latter to the wild wanderings of gloomy superstition; to the frightful consequences of associated folly, ignorance, and vice. The effects were such as might be expected; the people degenerated into the grossest Polytheism;* immoralities of the impurest nature were universally practised

* *Deorum maximè Mercurium colunt, cui certis diebus humanis quoque hostiis litare fas habent.*—Tacit. de Mor. Germ. c. ix.

*Et quibus immitis placatur sanguine diro
Tentates, horrensque feris altaribus Hesus,
Et Taranis Scythicæ non mitior ara Dianæ.*

Lucan, lib. i.

N

amongst

amongst them;* and they hesitated not at appeasing their multifarious deities by human sacrifices.†

Such was the state of religion in the Isle of Wight when the Romans arrived there; a system which it would be one of their first objects to overturn, for they wisely concluded that whilst its priests retained that dominion over the minds of the people, which the terrors of their doctrine had acquired to them, patient submission, quiet government, and public order could never be expected. They therefore (with respect to Britain) departed from their established maxim, *of adopting the deities of the conquered nations*, and never ceased from religious persecution, till not a vestige of Druidism remained.‡

* Uxores habent deni duodenique inter se communes, et maximè fratres cum fratribus, et parentes cum liberis.—Cæsar, p. 89.

† Cæsar, p. 120.

‡ Tacit. Ann. lib. XIV. c. xxx.

The

The splendid and motley, but more humane religion of Rome, was now introduced into the Isle of Wight; and we may suppose some temples would necessarily be reared there, by a people, who animated every virtue and vice, every passion and attribute of the mind, and even every abstracted idea, into a living divinity.

But the happy period now approached, when the refulgence of the Gospel was to disperse the moral darkness of the British empire; to illuminate the understandings, and purify the hearts of those, who had hitherto been wrapped in the gloom of Pagan superstition. Towards the conclusion of the first century after our Saviour's birth, the religion of Christ was received in England, and in the course of a few years, traversed a great part of the Southern coast; so that we may fairly conclude, by the beginning of the second century, the blessings, advantages, and comforts of Christianity were offered to, and accepted by the inhabitants of the Isle of Wight.

When, however, this district yielded to the fury of a new invader, and became the ac-

quisition of the Saxons, it changed its religion with its inhabitants, and once more witnessed the follies of Paganism.

The religion of the Saxons was that of a barbarous, fierce, and sensual people; gross and gloomy. Their deities were clothed with terrors and vengeance, and only to be appeased by the blood of human offerings. The fancied pleasures of Odin's Hall too, the feat of the departed warrior, were such as suited the depraved conceptions of an illiterate, unenlightened people, whose sole delights were feasting, slaughter, and the chase. In this mansion of happiness, the chief, who perished in battle, quaffed his favorite ale from the skulls of his enemies.* He appeased his hunger with the fat of the inexhaustible wild boar *Serimner*, which was renewed, as soon as carved from the immortal animal.† Again he experienced the extacy of

* In craniis inimicorum brevi bibam in præstantis Odini aulâ.—Epiced. Reg. Lodbrog apud Bartholin.

† Mallet's Northern Antiquities, vol. II. Edda, Fable 20th.

the chace in the pursuit of airy flags;† and had the daily felicity of mingling in battle, and falling, together with his opponent, transfixed by mutual wounds.§ A death, however, which was only to be temporary; for when dinner was announced, the spiritual forms of the slaughtered warriors were once more animated; they again mounted their steeds, and rode unhurt into Valhalla, where fresh recruits of fat and ale invited them to the diurnal debauch.*

Thus vicious, wild, and absurd, were the religious fancies of our Saxon ancestors, before the rays of Christianity had enlightened their darkling reason, and purified their gross conceptions.

It must be confessed, however, that depraved as these notions were, they were probably the

† Offian. v. l. p. 54.

§ Mallet's North. Antiq. ut supra.

* Instanti verò prandii tempore omnes incolumes in aulam equitant, et ad potandum confident. Edda, Mythog. xxxv. Apud Mallet, ut supra.

foundation

✓ foundation of that enthusiastic valor and contempt of death, which strongly marked their character, and rendered their conquest of Britain complete. Men who could firmly persuade themselves, that destruction in the field of battle would be followed by an endless fruition of delight, would rather court, than shun the enemy's sword. Their religious prejudices would teach them to despise danger in all its shapes, and convert death, which most other systems of religion involve with terrors, into a desirable event—a passport to immortality and joy.*

Towards the latter end of the seventh century, the Isle of Wight was once more liberated from Pagan superstition; though the circumstances of its conversion to Christianity were somewhat harsh and cruel. Bede thus relates the particulars: “As soon as Ceadwalla had possessed

* Certè populi quos despicit Arctos
 Felices errore suo! quos ille timorum
 Maximus haud urget lethi metus; *inde* ruendi
 In ferrum mens prona viris, animæque capaces
 Mortis; et ignavum redituræ parcere vitæ.

Lucan, Pharf. lib. I.

himself

himself of the kingdom of the *Gevissii*, he took also the Isle of Wight, which hitherto (i. e. since it had been in the possession of the Saxons) had been devoted to idolatry. He formed a resolution to massacre all its inhabitants, and place in their room people of his own province, binding himself by a vow, (though he himself was not yet converted to Christianity,) if he gained the island, to devote a fourth part of it, and its spoils to the Lord. This he performed, by granting it to Bishop Wilfred, who happened to be here at the time from his own country. The extent of this island, according to the estimation of the English, is equal to the support of one thousand two hundred families. The Bishop had the land of three hundred given him. This portion he committed to one of his clergy, named *Bernwin*, his sister's son, allowing him a priest, named *Hildila*, to instruct and baptize all that offered themselves. I must not here omit, that among the first fruits of those who were saved by their faith here, two infant brothers of *Arvandus*, king of the island, obtained the crown of martyrdom, by the special
grace

grace of God. On the enemy's approach they escaped out of the island, and were conveyed to the adjoining country, where being conducted to the place called *Ad Lapidem*,* and thinking there to conceal themselves from the victorious monarch, they were betrayed, and ordered to be put to death. A certain abbot and priest named *Cynbreth*, who had a monastery not far off, at a place called Reodford,† or the Ford of Reeds, hearing of it, came to the king (who was concealed in the same neighbourhood, to have his wounds dressed, which he had received in battle in the Isle of Wight,) and besought him that if the lads must die, they might first receive Baptism. The king granted his request; and he instructing them in the word of truth, and washing them in the fountain of life, secured their admission into the king-

* Probably, *Stone*, a manor in the parish of Fawley; near the sea shore, and immediately opposite the Isle of Wight.

† The ancient name of Red-bridge; where, in the Saxon times was a religious house. — Tanner's Not. Monastica.

dom of Heaven. When the executioner came, they gladly submitted to temporal death, by which they doubted not to pass to eternal life. In this manner," continues Bede, "after all the provinces of Britain had embraced Christianity, the Isle of Wight received it also."*

* Bede, lib. VI. 16. Gough's Camden, vol. I. p. 124.

CHAP. II.

OF THE RELIGIOUS FOUNDATIONS IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

IT is seldom found that any religion receives improvement from time ; but on the contrary, that as it gains age it acquires corruption. Being an universal concern, it is in the hands of all ; and the follies and superstitions of some, the vices and prejudices of others, will, in the natural course of things, soon vitiate and deform it. Such was the case with the purest, simplest, and best of all religions ; and *Christianity* in a very few ages after the apostolical times, had, by the ignorance or perverseness of its professors, been stripped of almost all those divine graces, which adorned it when first promulgated

to

to mankind. Errors innumerable, both in doctrine and practice, darkened the whole Christian world. Monstrous and impious absurdities disgraced its worship. The spirit of religion entirely evaporated, and riseless ridiculous ceremonies were substituted in the room of real piety.* In this state of religious depravity,

* The following is the picture of a *good christian*, in the seventh century, as drawn by a *saint* of that age; by which we discover that, in the opinions of those times, a man might be deemed extremely pious, and reckon himself sure of heaven, without the trouble of fulfilling one single duty towards God or his neighbour. "Bonus Christianus est qui ad ecclesiam frequenter venit, et oblationem, quæ in altari Deo offeratur, exhibet; qui de fructibus suis non gustat, nisi prius Deo aliquid offerat; qui, quoties sanctæ solemnitates adveniunt, ante dies plures castitatem etiam cum propriâ uxore, ut securâ conscientia Domini altare accedere possit; qui, postremò, symbolum vel orationem Dominicam numeriter tenet. Redimite animas vestras de pœnâ, dum habetis in potestate remedia: oblationes et decimas ecclesiæ offerte; luminaria sanctis locis, juxta quod habetis, exhibete; ad ecclesiam quoque frequentius convenite; sanctorum patrocinia humiliter expetite: quod si observaveritis, securi in die judicii ante tribunal æterni judicis venientes, dicetis, 'Da, Domine, quia dedimus,' &c."—Vita Sancti Eligii in Dacherii Spicileg. Vet. Scrip. vol. II.

the obligations of morality would of course be but little attended to ; and in fact we find, that, during the *middle ages*, as they are called, (from the ninth to the twelfth century, when this mantle of mental darkness was most closely drawn over Christendom) the different offices, relations, and duties of life were less understood, and worse fulfilled, than at any other period of time. During this gloomy interval, many strange opinions arose, and amongst the rest, that the prayers of *others* might be as efficacious in averting the wrath of Heaven from a sinner, as his own devotions ; or, in other words, that it was possible to be *pious by proxy*. A principle like this, which reconciled temporal licentiousness with eternal felicity, and permitted a free scope to the passions without annexing the terrors of future punishment to their indulgence, met with a welcome reception ; and sinners of affluence and rank immediately began founding religious houses for the reception of those who were thus to be their *proxies* in the works of prayer and godliness. Hence arose the numerous monasteries which
were

were thickly sprinkled in every country throughout the Christian world, before the close of the seventh century ; and for several ages afterwards increased with a rapidity only to be accounted for by the *natural* of the *opinions* which gave them birth originally.

The Normans, a fierce and profligate people, were deeply tinged with these superstitions and delusive notions ; and as soon as they had acquired England, began with all expedition, founding abbeys and monasteries throughout the kingdom. William Fitz-Osborne, on whom the Isle of Wight was bestowed, followed the example of his countrymen, and founded the priory of Carisbrook. The history of this religious house is very concise.

Baldwin de Redvers, Earl of Devon, in the reign of King Stephen, grants the church of Carisbrook (after the death of two persons mentioned in his deed) to the abbot and convent of Lyra (in Normandy), to be freely by them enjoyed, either as demesne, or they might send monks to the said church.

A grant

A grant and confirmation of William de Vernun, in the reign of king John, occurs, by which the church of Carisbrook is to receive two marks per annum, out of the toll of the island; on the condition of the monks performing daily service in the chapel of Newport.

A general charter of confirmation ratifies to the abbot and convent of Lyra in Normandy, the church of Carisbrook, with divers other chapels and churches in the island.

Edward III. when he made his ill-founded claims to the crown of France, seized upon Carisbrook, and all its churches, as an alien priory; and granted it to the abbey of Mont Grace, in Yorkshire. Henry IV. however, immediately on coming to the crown, restored it with many others to the former possessors.

Henry V. again resumed it, and granted it to the monastery of Shene in Surry, where it continued till the dissolution. In the reign of Henry VIII. this monastery was leased to Sir James Worsley; from the widow of whose son,

fon, it came to Sir Francis Walsingham. Sir Thomas Fleming afterwards made a purchase of it; and through his descendents it devolved to the present possessors; the vicarage remaining in the crown till the time of Charles I. who gave it to Queen's College, Oxford. The chapels of Northwood, West Cowes, and Newport, belong to the church of Carisbrook.*

The abbey of Quarr, or De Quarreirat as it was anciently called, owes its origin to Baldwin Earl of Devon. who in the thirty-second year of Henry I. gave the manor of Arreton to Geoffry, abbot of Savigny in Normandy, for the building of this monastery, which was dedicated to St. Mary. This abbey appears to have been richly endowed, and that too, by personages of the first consequence; several of whom made it the place of their interment. Amongst these were its founder, Earl Baldwin, Adeliza his countess, and Henry

* Sir Rich. Worsley's Hist. p. 163, et infra.

† Probably from its neighbouring stone quarries. It was of the Cistercian order.

their

their son; William de Vernun, who bequeathed three hundred pounds (a prodigious sum in the thirteenth century) for the erection of a monument to himself, his lady; and the lady Cicely, second daughter of Edward IV.

In the fifteenth century the lands of Quarr Abbey, were taxed as follows:

" De Redditu assis. taxat. ad	- viij marks.
" Apud Newnham ad	xv m.
" Apud Sambele (Combley) ad	xvj m.
" Apud Arreton, ad	xviij m.
" Virga de Bykeburie (Būgbury) ad	lx s.
" Apud Haffeley, ad	xviij m.
" Apud Lovecomb, ad	xij m.
" Apud Staplehurst et Claybrooke	- xl s.
" Apud Rowebug	- l s.
" Apud Schete	- vij m.
" Apud Shalcomb & Compton	- x m.
" Apud Benestede	- xl s.
" Apud Foxore	- lvij s.
" Apud Schrob & Goy, ad	- xlij s.
" De duobus molendinis apud x ^{ti} ecclesiam	xij s.
" De 4 Molendinis in Ins. Vecta	- xv s.
" De	

" De Proventu tannaria - - - xl s.

" Sm. ^{xx}iiiij. xvj*l.* iijs. iiij*d.* Inde decima ix*l.* xijs. iiij*d.*."*

After the dissolution of Quarr Abbey it was purchased by a Mr. George Mills of Southampton, who, for the sake of its materials, so completely dilapidated it, that very few of the remains have reached our time.

The situation of this religious house is a very pleasing and secluded one; commanding a charming view of the water, and deeply embosomed in woods.

Towards the close of the thirteenth century, the oratory of Burton was founded by John de Insula, Rector of Shalfleet, and Thomas de Winton, Rector of Godshill; and regulated by the following statutes:

1. That there shall be fix chaplains and one clerk to officiate both for the living and the dead under the rules of St. Augustine.

2. That one of these shall be presented to the Bishop of Winchester, to be the arch-

* Sir R. Worfleay, 176.

priest; to whom the rest shall take an oath of obedience.

3. That the arch-priest shall be chosen by the chaplains there residing, who shall present him to the bishop within twenty days after any vacancy shall happen.

4. That they shall be subject to the immediate authority of the bishop.

5. When any chaplain shall die, his goods shall remain to the oratory.

6. They shall have only one mess, with a pittance, at a meal, excepting on the greater festivals, when they may have three messes.

7. They shall be diligent in reading and praying.

8. They shall not go beyond the bounds of the oratory, without licence from the arch-priest.

9. Their habit shall be of one colour, either black or blue; they shall be cloathed *pallio Hiberniensi, de nigra boneta cum pileo.*

10. The arch-priest shall sit at the head of the table; next to him those who have celebrated
brated

brated magnam missam; then the priest of St. Mary; next the priest of the Holy Trinity; and then the priest who says mass for the dead.

11. The clerk shall read something edifying to them while they dine.

12. They shall sleep in one room.

13. They shall use a special prayer for their benefactors.

14. They shall in all their ceremonies, and in tinkling the bell, follow the use of Sarum.

15. The arch-priest alone shall have charge of the business of the house.

16. They shall, all of them, at their admission into the house, swear to the observance of these statutes.

As soon as the society was established, the founders granted the patronage of the oratory to John, Bishop of Winchester, and his successors, that he might become a protector and defender of them, the arch-priest, and his fellow-chaplains.

In the Eighteenth of Henry VI. this religious house was entirely surrendered into the hands

of the Bishop of Winchester; and, together with its lands, granted to Winchester College; under which society, the site and demesnes of the oratory are still held.*

There appears to have been a small priory at St. Helen's, belonging to some abbey in France, of the Cluniac order. It is supposed to have been founded soon after the conquest; but by whom is not known. It was one of the alien priories given by Henry VI. to his college at Eton, of whose possessions it is still a part.†

The Priory of Appuldurcombe was founded and made a cell to the Abbey of Montsbury in Normandy, by Richard de Redvers, founder

* Worsley, 177 et infra.

† There was a small church at St. Helen's built by the convent, who supplied it from their own community, till such time as the canons required resident vicars. In Cardinal Beaufort's valuation the church is rated at thirty marks. The old church was situated so near the sea, that the waves carried off part of the building. A brief was obtained in 1719 and a new church erected in a more convenient spot.—St. Helen's is a vicarage; patron, Eton College. Church dedicated to St. Helena.

of

of that abbey. The latter monastery placed a prior and two monks here, to receive the profits of their lands. King Henry IV. during a war with France, presented the priory and its demesnes, which were Appuldurcombe, Sandford, and Week, to the nuns without Aldgate, London; who afterwards obtained a confirmation of the lands from the abbey of Montsburgh. The Bishop of Winchester being ordered, tempore Edward III. and during the war with France, to remove the religious belonging to the alien monasteries, to Hyde Abbey near Winchester; the prior and two monks were sent thither from Appuldurcombe.*

The priory of St. Cross, near Newport, was a cell to the abbey of Tyrone in France, and probably an hospital. Its founder is unknown. Being an alien priory, it was seized by the crown, and given to the college of Winchester, which still possesses it.

In the parish of Northwood, also, was a religious house, consisting of "Brothers and

* Worsley, 181.

Sisters

Sisters of the Fraternity of St. John the Baptist;" and under the control and regulation of certain officers called *Seneschalles*, for stewards. It was founded at the latter end of Henry the Seventh's reign, and suppressed by his successor.

There were also several other small charitable and religious foundations in the Isle of Wight, of many of which scarcely more than the names remain. They were as follow :

1. A chapel dedicated to St. Austin, belonging to Carisbrook priory, for lepers.
2. A chapel for the infirm, licensed by the bishop, who gave the appointment of the chaplain to the abbot of Lyra.
3. A chapel was built at Knighton, in the year 1301, by Sir Ralph de Gorges, Lord of that manor; and was often presented to by his family.
4. The Lisle family, Lords of Appleford, erected a chapel on that manor. Sir John Lisle presented to it in the year 1331, and Sir Bartholemew Lisle in the year 1344.

5. Walter

5. Walter de Godyton founded St. Catherine's, a chapel on Chale Down, in the year 1323.

6. The chantry at Gatcombe was a chapel in the church at Whitwell, dedicated to St. Radigund; founder unknown.

7. Brennew was a small chapel in the parish of Freshwater. In a valuation of the spiritualities in the Diocese of Winchester, made in the time of Cardinal Beaufort, this chapel is taxed at one mark.

8. Woolverton,	}	These three chapels belonged to the lordship of Bimbridge, wherein they were situated; which, with the advowson of the chapels, were granted away in the forty-sixth year of Edward III. They do not appear to have been endowed.
9. Middleton,		
10. La Wode,		

11. A chantry at Newport, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and founded by John Garston of that town.

12. A chapel de Sancto Licio, mentioned in Cardinal Beaufort's valuation, but exempted as insignificant.

We

We shall conclude this summary of the Ecclesiastical History of the Isle of Wight, with a concise account of its existing churches.*

Brading church, the oldest in the island, was built in the Saxon times. Its advowson being contested at law, in the thirty-seventh year of Henry III. between the abbot of Wenlock, and Walter Lisle and Maud his wife, the point was tried, and a decision passed in favor of the convent.

Shortly after this event, the prior and convent of Wenlock being disturbed in the possession of the advowson, resigned it to the Bishop of Winchester; in which see it continued till the episcopacy of John de Pontifferrâ; who at the request of Edward I. appropriated the church to the convent of Breamore. At the dissolution it was granted to Henry Courtney, Marquis of Exeter; but on his attainder, was given to Trinity College, Cambridge.†

* Sir Richard Worley's Hist. p. 191 to p. 274.

† Year-tenths of this vicarage are 2l. 8s. It is dedicated to St. Mary.

The church of Yaverland was built towards the close of the thirteenth century, probably by one of the Ruffel family. It pays a small pension to the mother church of Brading. It is called a chapel in Cardinal Beaufort's valuation, and exempted from taxation on account of its inability.*

The chapel at Shanklin is annexed to Bonchurch. The inhabitants of this parish, however, bury their dead in that of Brading, and pay an annual pension of ten shillings to the Rector of Brading, as an acknowledgment for the same. The chapel was built and endowed by one of the Lisle family.†

The parish church of St. Boniface, or Bonchurch, as it is commonly called, was built in the early Anglo-Norman times; but when, is uncertain.‡

* Patron of this rectory is the Rev. Mr. Wright; the valuation in the King's books, 6l. 6. 10½; and its year-tenths, 12s. 8½.

† The patrons of this vicarage are — Hill, Esq. and Mr. Popham.

‡ Patrons, — Hill, Esq. and Mr. Popham; year-tenths, 2s. 8½.

The church of New-church is a very ancient fabric, built prior to the general Domesday survey; William Fitz-Osborne on receiving the Isle of Wight, presented this church, and five others, to the abbey of Lyra in Normandy, which he founded. It continued part of the possessions of that monastery, till the duchy of Normandy was lost to England, when it was given to Beaulieu Abbey in the New Forest.†

The parish of New-church includes within it the village of Ryde, where there is a chapel, built by Thomas Player, Esq. in 1719; who charged the manor with an annual rent of ten pounds, payable to the Vicar of New-church, to officiate therein, or provide a minister.*

The church of Whitwell is properly a chapel belonging to Godshill; but having separate parochial rates, it is deemed a distinct

† This is a rectory; church dedicated to St. John the Baptist; united to Carisbrook.

* Adjoining this parish is that of St. Lawrence, the church of which is the smallest in the island. It is a rectory; patron Sir R. Worsley, Bart.

parish.

parish. The chapel of St. Radegund, which is now the chancel of the church, was built and endowed by De Eftur, Lord of Gatcombe. The Rector of Gatcombe receives the rent of the lands with which the chantry was endowed, for which he ought to officiate in the church at certain times during the year.†

The parish church of Niton, formerly Niweton, and now commonly Crab-Niton, was one of the churches given by William Fitz-Osborne to his abbey of Lyra. It came to the crown at the dissolution, and was presented by Charles I. (with five other churches in Hampshire) to Queen's College, Oxford, in exchange for their plate.*

Godshill church is an ancient Saxon edifice, and was one of the churches bestowed by William Fitz-Osborne on the abbey of Lyra. It afterwards became the property of Sheene Convent in Surry; and is now jointly vested

† This is a vicarage; patrons, Queen's Coll. Oxford.

* It is a rectory; dedicated to St. John Baptist; in King's books 20l. 7. 1; year-tenth 2l. 0. 8½.

in Queen's College, Oxford; and the Worley family.*

The parish church of Arreton was included in the six churches given by William Fitz-Osborne to the abbey of Lyra. Afterwards Baldwin de Redvers bestowed the manor of Arreton together with its church, on his new foundation, Quarr Abbey; in which they remained till the dissolution.†

The parish church of Binstead was probably built by one of the Bishops of Winchester, having always belonged to that see, and paid an annual pension of two shillings to the sacrist of the monastery there. It is subjected to the rector of Calbourn, who formerly claimed archidiaconal jurisdiction over Binstead and Brixton.‡

The small parish of Wootton was taken out of Whippingham parish in the reign of Henry

* The church is dedicated to All Saints; its year-tenths are 3l. 15. 9. It is a vicarage.

† This church is dedicated to St. George; patron, John Fleming, Esq. year-tenths, 2l. 2.—It is a vicarage.

‡ Binstead is a rectory dedicated to the Holy Cross; patron, Bishop of Winchester. Year-tenths, 2s. 8½.

III. when Walter de Insulâ built the chapel, and endowed it with glebe, arable, pasture, and wood lands; adding, at the same time, certain other tithes. This church was afterwards consumed by fire, when the one now standing was erected upon the same site. Adjoining to the original church, was a chapel dedicated to St. Edmund the King, which had an independent endowment, and a chaplain distinct from the rector of the church.*

The church of Northwood is a chapel of ease to Carisbrook, but, since the reign of Henry VIII. has enjoyed all parochial privileges, and is exempted from contributing to the repairs of the mother church. When the priory of Carisbrook obtained the rectory, and endowed the vicarage, the tithes of Northwood, both great and small, were assigned to the vicar. The

* Wootton is a rectory dedicated to St. Edmund.— Patron, Rev. Mr. Walton; valuation in King's books, 7l. 16. 0½; Year-tithes, 15s. 7¼. Adjoining to this parish is that of Whippingham; it is a rectory; patron, the King. Val. King's books, 19l. 1. 5½. Year-tithes, 4l. 18. 1¾.

Vicar

Vicar of Carisbrook is Rector of Northwood.†

Northwood parish includes West Cowes, the chapel of which place was erected in 1657, consecrated in 1662, and endowed in 1671 by Mr. Richard Stephens, with five pounds per annum for ever. It was farther endowed in the year 1679, by Bishop Morley, with twenty pounds per annum; provided the inhabitants paid the minister (who is always appointed by them) an additional forty pounds per annum; otherwise the said endowment to be forfeited for ever.

Newport church is supposed to have been erected towards the latter end of Henry the Second's reign. The inhabitants, however, had no burial-place here till the time of Queen Elizabeth, when they were indebted to one of the heaviest of God's visitations, for the privilege of interment.*

† The church is dedicated to St. John the Baptist.

* The plague was so heavy at Newport, that the burial-place of Carisbrook, the mother church, was not sufficiently large to receive the number of the dead.

Carisbrook

Carisbrook being the mother church, the appointment of the curate of Newport is *strictly* in the vicar of that parish. But as the stipend paid to the officiating minister arises from a rate levied on the town's-people, they seem, in justice, entitled to have their inclination consulted in the appointment. The present incumbent, however, appears not to be of this opinion; and has actually given a nomination contrary to the wishes of the parish. The consequence of this is an universal discontent, extremely prejudicial to the interests of religion; for the larger part of the congregation, disgusted at having a minister forced upon them, contrary to their choice, have, for some time past, discontinued their attendance on divine worship. Whether the pertinacity of the curate in holding the appointment under these circumstances, or that of the congregation in continuing to testify their disgust in this manner, be most blamable, must be left for others to determine.

St. Nicholas chapel, in Carisbrook castle, was built either by William Fitz-Osborne, or his son
Roger,

Roger, Earl of Hereford ; and given by Baldwin de Redvers to Quarr Abbey, together with its lands. The parish of St. Nicholas has no other place of worship than this chapel, at which, for many years, no service has been performed ; hence its little living is a *sinecture*, in the gift of the Governor of the Isle of Wight. The crown pays for this chapel three pounds a year to the Vicar of Carisbrook, as an acknowledgment to the mother church.*

The parish church of Carisbrook is a pile of great antiquity, erected before the Domesday survey, as appears by its being mentioned therein, and called The Church of the Manor. It was formerly of much greater extent than it is at present ; Sir Francis Walsingham (in the reign of Elizabeth) having robbed it of its chancel. He was led to do this by a parsimony not very justifiable ; for, having the lease of the priory, and by that being obligated to repair this part of the edifice, he avoided the expence soon after he became the lessee, by persuading

* It is a vicarage.—Year-tenths, 14s.

the parishioners that the body of the church would be sufficiently large for them. To his persuasions, he added the magic of one hundred marks, and by the united force of both, the devoted chancel fell.*

It does not appear when Gatcombe church was erected. The manor, however, is as old as Edward the Confessor's time ; to which the patronage of the church was always annexed. The chantry called *Cantaria Manerii de Gatcombe*, was at Whitwell, and dedicated to St. Radigund. The land adjoining to that chapel, which was the endowment of the chantry, is esteemed to be in the parish of Gatcombe, and pays a pension to it as the mother church. The Vicar of Godshill officiates in the chapel of Whitwell, where the Rector of Gatcombe is bound to assist him ; but the distance rendering it inconvenient for him to discharge that duty, he

* This is a vicarage ; patron, Queen's Coll. Oxford ; valuation in King's books, 23l. 8. 1½. year-tenths, 2l. 6s. 9¼. Church dedicated to St. Mary.

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pays

pays four nobles per annum to the Vicar of Godshill to perform the whole.†

The church of Kingston (which is the smallest parish in the island) was built by one of the Kingston family, who long possessed the manor. They also appear, by the registers of the Bishops of Winchester, to have enjoyed the presentation to it.*

Chale church was built by Hugh Vernun, in the reign of Henry I. and dedicated to St. Andrew. This parish being originally included in that of Carisbrook, the priest of the latter claimed the new church of Chale as soon as it was erected; a claim which the founder endeavoured to disprove. To terminate, however, all animosities, Hugh Vernun agreed to assign to the church of Carisbrook a moiety of the glebe land, and tithes of burials

† This is a rectory; patron, Edward Meux Worsley, Esq. valuation in King's books, 25l. 18. 9. year-tenths, 2l. 11. 1½.

* It is a rectory; patron, — Worsley, Esq. val. in King's books, 5l. 6. 8. year-tenths, 10s. 8.

and

and oblations, excepting those of his own house, which he reserved entire, for maintaining the service and repairs of the church of Chale. The Parson of Chale, also, was to perform the whole service of his church; and on these considerations, the Priest of Carisbrook testified his consent to the new church having a cemetery; an agreement which the Bishop of Winchester, William Gifford, confirmed under his anathema. §

The church of Shorwell, (formerly a chapel) was built shortly after the foundation of Carisbrook priory; and confirmed to it by the charter of William de Vernun. It was included in the parish of Carisbrook till the reign of Edward III. when the inconvenience of carrying its dead to be buried such a distance, occasioned its separation from that parish, and having parochial rights of its own. †

§ It is a rectory; patron, Sir R. Worsley, Bart. val. in King's books, 14l. 3. 11½. year-tenths, 1l. 8. 4¾.

† Shorwell is a rectory; valuation in King's books, 20l. 0. 2½. year-tenths, 2l. 0. 0¾. dedicated to St. Peter.

The parish of Brixton was taken out of that of Calbourn by one of the Bishops of Winchester, who built its church, and endowed it with parochial privileges. The former rectory anciently claimed archidiaconal jurisdiction over that of Brixton, to which the rectors of the latter refusing to submit, the contest rose to actual violence.* The claim, however, was probably accommodated by the bishop, the patron of both churches.†

Motteston church was built in the twelfth century. In the fourteenth, we find it, together with the manor, in the possession of the Langford family; for Dionysia, widow of Sir John de Langford, presented to it in 1364. Edward Cheke, Esq. presented to it in 1374;

* There was anciently a dean of this island, to superintend ecclesiastical affairs; we find also, by the registers of Winchester, that William of Wykeham substituted a suffragan bishop here, as was afterwards done by Henry VIII.

† Brixton is a rectory; patron, Bishop of Winchester; val. in King's books, 3l. 3. 4. year-tenths, 3l. 4. 4. Church dedicated to St. Mary.

and

and with his descendents it continued for above three centuries.*

Calbourn church appears to have had thirty shillings from the manor of that name, in the time of Edward the Confessor; a circumstance which proves its remote antiquity. The advowson of it, remained in the see of Winchester till the time of Edward I. who in the twelfth year of his reign, deprived the bishop of that diocese (in consequence of a personal pique) both of the church and manor of Calbourn. They were however afterwards returned, in consequence of a heavy fine paid by the bishop to Edward.†

There is a chapel at Newtown, a manor within this parish, which belongs to Calbourn church; and the glebe with which it is endowed, is enjoyed by the rector. In the survey of the

* It is a rectory; valuation in King's books, 11l. 16. 3d. year-tenths, 1l. 3. 7½. Dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul.

† It is a rectory; patron, Bishop of Winchester; valuation in King's books, 19l. 17. 8½; year-tenths, 1l. 19. 9. Dedicated to All Saints.

island taken in the reign of Elizabeth, the Parson of Calbourn is said to hold a grant of forty acres, called Magdalen's land, belonging to the chapel of Newtown, for which land he provided a reader for the chapel.

The church of Shalfleet is mentioned in the Domesday survey, and probably was built shortly before that general census. Edward III. granted it to William Montecute, Earl of Salisbury; who gave it to his new-founded abbey of Bisham in Berkshire. The impropriation, after the dissolution of the monasteries, was purchased by Lord Chief Justice Fleming, and devised by him to a younger branch of his family. It is now in the crown.*

It is not known at what period the church of Brook was erected. Some years since a dispute occurred relative to the patronage of it, between St. John's College, Cambridge, which claimed it as a chapel belonging to Freshwater, and the Bowerman family, who possessed the manor of Brook. The cause was tried, and determined in

* Shalfleet is a vicarage; year-tenths, 1l. 17. 2½.

favor

favor of the latter ; which family has ever since presented to it.*

The church of Thorley was probably built by Amicia, Countess of Devon, who gave it to the priory of Christchurch, in Hampshire. where it remained till the dissolution. It was then exchanged (with other estates of the priory) with Thomas Hopson, Esquire, in 1546, for his manor of Marybone in Middlesex.†

The present church of Yarmouth was built in the thirty-fifth year of Henry VIII. This is not, however, its original one. In the thirteenth century, a small chapel was erected at the East end of the present town, which the French, in one of their descents on the island, destroyed. A second place of worship was then built at the Western extremity, and this too fell a sacrifice to the same people, in a visit which they made in the reign of Henry VIII. A third time the

* It is a rectory ; year-tenths, 3s. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$. Dedicated to St. Mary.

† It is a vicarage ; year-tenths, 13s. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$. Dedicated to St. Swithin.

inhabitants

inhabitants rebuilt their church, and placed it in the middle of the town, where it at present stands. The endowment of this church being extremely small, it was augmented by the bounty of Queen Anne; to which was added a sum of money given by Colonel Henry Holmes, for that purpose.*

The church of Freshwater was given by William Fitz-Osborne to his abbey of Lyra; where it continued till the alien monasteries were seized on by the crown. It was afterwards repeatedly granted to the captains of the island for the time being; but at length given to St. John's College, Cambridge, where it now remains.†

* It is a rectory; patron, the King. Dedicated to St. James.

† It is a rectory; valuation, King's books, 19l. 8s. 4d. year-tenths, 11. 18s. 10d. Dedicated to All Saints.

THE
CIVIL HISTORY

OF THE
ISLE OF WIGHT.

CHAP. I.

OF THE BOROUGHs OF NEWPORT, NEWTOWN,
AND YARMOUTH.

THE Isle of Wight sends to the House of Commons, six members ; two for Newport, two for Newtown, and the same number for Yarmouth.

Of these boroughs, Newport and Yarmouth returned representatives to parliament as early as the twenty-third year of Edward I. a period, according to antiquaries, when the representatives of the commons were first legally convened.*

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* Willis's Not. Parl. Preface.

The incorporation of Newport by charter took place in the first year of James I. when the bailiff and burgeses of the place were constituted a body politic; the corporation to consist of a mayor, and twenty-four burgeses. By this charter, the mayor, recorder, or his deputy, with two of the burgeses, are impowered to hold a court on every Friday, for the trial of all small causes arising within the borough; to take recognizances of debts according to the statutes merchant, and of the staple; and to have a gaol for the reception of such persons as they should commit for debts, felonies, or other offences.

Charles II. in the thirteenth year of his reign, granted another charter to Newport; in which the style of the corporation is altered from its original one, to that of *Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgeses*. By this charter, the mayor is to be chosen from among the aldermen, who are twelve in number; these are to be chosen out of the chief burgeses, by the mayor and aldermen; and the mayor is to be sworn
into

into his office before the governor of the island or his steward.* Amongst other privileges granted or confirmed by this charter, it is mentioned, that the mayor, aldermen, and chief burgeses are exempted from serving on juries at the assizes, or general quarter sessions.

From the twenty-third of Edward I. to the twenty-seventh year of Elizabeth, Newport does not appear to have sent any representatives to parliament; but since the latter period, its returns of two members to each parliament have been very regular.

Newport was constituted a *borough* almost as soon as it came into the possession of the De Redvers family; Richard, the son of the first grantee, bestowing on its inhabitants those various liberties which in early days formed a borough.† These liberties consisted of a per-

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miffion

* This ceremony is now performed in the old chapel of St. Nicholas, in Carisbrook castle.

† It is difficult to ascertain precisely, the origin of burghs in this kingdom; though we find them mentioned in the laws of Ina King of the West Saxons, which

mission to trade under the protection of the lord of the demesne : a right of exacting a toll for all goods brought to be disposed of within the limits of the borough : a privilege of having a market, and holding fairs in the same ; and various others of the like nature : liberties which were generally, either purchased originally of the lord by those on whom they were conferred, or paid for, by a regular annual rent levied on every burghers.*

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which gives them an antiquity of nearly eleven hundred years. Among the municipal constitutions of this wise monarch, for the internal peace and government of his kingdom, we find an ordinance to this effect ; that, " whoever shall be guilty of a violation of the peace in a *borough* under the protection of the king or bishop, he shall pay one hundred and twenty shillings." *Leges Inæ apud Lambardæ Archaionom. p. ix. c. 46.* Vide my " *Topographical Remarks relating to Hampshire,*" *Blair, 1792, vol. II. p. 51.*

* Boroughs, we have seen in the last note, were of Saxon origin. They were intended for the promotion of industry and commerce ; and their inhabitants were encouraged to exertion by particular privileges, immunities, and laws. Here markets were established ; imports and exports of various merchandise carried on,
under

A second charter of immunities and privileges was granted by Isabella de Fortibus, in the thirteenth century, to the burgeses of Newport; by which she invests them with the power of taking toll *throughout the whole island*, in all villages and roads; on the sea, and in the har-

under the *Prepositus Burghi*, or bailiff of the borough, appointed by the prince or lord of the fee to reside in the place, and gather the tolls, duties, and impositions, arising from the trade of it. Notwithstanding, however, the various regulations thus made in favor of those who inhabited boroughs, their state, for the most part, in the Saxon times, seems to have been nothing more than a certain qualified slavery. Repeated notices occur in *Domesday book*, of towns whose burgeses were confined to a residence on the spot where they traded; who were so completely under the dominion of their lord, that they could not do homage to, nor receive protection from any other superior. In this state, it is probable, the boroughs remained till the Anglo-Norman kings took possession of the English crown; who, finding that commerce was cramped by the restrictions under which the burgeses labored, relaxed by degrees the servile ties, and remitted the numerous imposts that had arisen in the Saxon times; granting them liberty of person, and accepting, in lieu of the duties formerly received, a fixed redditus, called a *fee-farm rent*, which was proportioned to the amount of the original impositions. At the same time also we may look for the origin of *chartered corporations*.—*Topog. Remarks*, vol. II, p. 54.

bour;*

bour;* in fairs, and at markets; in all places, and on all commodities. She further grants, an exemption to the burgesſes from attending the hundred and county courts; a privilege of depaſturing their cattle in her foreſt of Parkhurſt; a power of trying all pleas ariſing within the borough, and fixing the quantum of fines on conviction; and a liberty of retaining and dividing amongſt themſelves all ſuch fines as ſhould ſo ariſe. All which immunities and privileges were to be held by the ſaid burgesſes, in conſideration of their paying to her and her heirs, eighteen marks, annually; and to the prior and monks of Carisbrook, two marks, annually.† This charter was confirmed by Edward III. Richard II. Henry VII. Edward IV. Henry VIII. Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth; ſome of whom, particularly Edward IV. added other grants and privileges to the borough, ſuch as the

* This is the foundation of a duty even now paid at Cowes, by all ſhips which caſt anchor in that road.

† Carta Ifabellæ Corn. Alb. Sir R. Worſley's Append. No. XXI,

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forfeitures of outlaws, felons, and suicides, within the borough; and the petty customs of any port or creek in the island.

This town has given title to four *earls*: Lord Mountjoy Blount, natural son of the Earl of Devonshire, created by Charles I. Baron of Thurstleton, and Earl of Newport. He died in the year 1665, and his three sons successively enjoyed the title. On the decease of Henry, the last surviving one, unmarried, it became extinct. Lord Windsor was also *Baron Newport* in Queen Anne's reign.

The borough of Newtown (which changed its ancient name of Francheville, on being rebuilt when burnt by the French in the reign of Richard II.) is a prescriptive borough, and first sent members to the senate in the twenty-seventh year of Queen Elizabeth. It was formerly a place of considerable consequence; and traces of its magnitude are still discernible in four lanes, which intersect each other at right angles, and are said, formerly to have been covered with houses.

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The first liberties and franchises granted to the burgesſes of Newtown are contained in a charter of Aymer, Biſhop of Wincheſter, lord of the place ; who inveſts his town of Francheville, with all ſuch immunities and privileges as were enjoyed by the inhabitants of Taunton, Alesford, and Farnham. This charter bears date at Swanifton : and afterwards received the ſeveral confirmations of Edward II. Edward IV. and Queen Elizabeth. Edward II. alſo granted to the burgesſes of Newtown, a charter in the eleventh year of his reign ; in which is beſtowed the liberty of a *market* to be holden on the Wednesday in every week ; and of a fair annually, on the feaſt of St. Mary Magdalene, on the eve preceding, and on the day following.

The elective franchise in this borough was determined by the Houſe of Commons in 1729, to be confined to the mayor and burgesſes, having borough lands. Previous to this final adjustment of the right, perpetual conteſts aroſe relative to the exertion of it. The moſt ancient books of the corporation prove, that the qualifications

fication of a burgesſ was formerly the holding of a *borough land*, paying rent to the mayor and chief burgeſſes; but in the time of Charles II. the right of voting was confined to the burgeſſes alone, and the number of theſe limited to twelve. This limitation however was pronounced illegal by the corporation, in the reign of William III. which met on the twentieth day of September, 1698, and came to the following reſolutions:

“ At this aſſembly, upon examining the ancient records of the ſaid corporation, (Newtown, alias Francheville) and taking the depositions on oath of James Overy; as alſo upon the averment of ſome of the chief burgeſſes there, then preſent; it is reſolved, that the reſtraint of the chief burgeſſes of this corporation, to the number of twelve, or any leſs number than are freeholders of borough lands is againſt law, and contrary to the ancient uſage of this corporation.”

“ Alſo 'tis ordered and agreed, that whoſoever ſhall prove himſelf to be a freeholder, of any borough land in fee, either by the rent-roll now produced in this aſſembly, bearing date and

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beginning

beginning in the year of our Lord 1685, (whereof a true copy shall be kept by the mayor for the time being) or otherwise effectually in law, shall upon demand, be sworn a chief burghers."

This meeting had been convened in consequence of an agreement entered into during the preceding year, between Lord Cutts, the then governor, and the principal gentlemen in the island; the object of which was, to restore that harmony, good fellowship and neighbourhood of the district, that had been mightily interrupted by constant disputes relative to the right of voting in the three corporations of Newport, Newtown, and Yarmouth. In these articles of agreement it was stipulated, that the governor should call a hall at Newtown, examine witnesses concerning the ancient method of choosing members to serve in parliament for that corporation, and effectually restore the said corporation, and all who have a just pretence to be members of it, to their ancient rights of burghage-tenure: provided always, that the said governor be first put in possession of a qualifying burghage-tenure, sufficient

ficient to enable him to be a member and elector of the said corporation : he paying for the same.

The meeting was called, and the regulations above detailed entered into at it.*

In the course of a few years, however, after this adjustment, the right of voting became again the occasion of controversy. The corporation, on inspecting the old books of the borough, discovered that the arrangement of 1698 was contrary to the ancient usage ; the minutes of that meeting were therefore erased from the town-book, and those who enjoyed a *freehold in a borough land* were once more

* The Corporation at that time consisted of,

John, Lord Cutts, Mayor.

Joseph Dudley, Esq. Deputy-Mayor.

Henry Dore
Col. David Urry
Mr. John Chiverton
Major Henry Holmes
Mr. John Philips
Mr. David Urry
John Leigh, Esq.

James Worley, Esq.
Col. Richard Holmes
Mr. Edward Hayles
Sir Rob. Worley, Bart.
William Stephen, Esq.
William Bowerman, Esq.

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invested

invested with a right of voting for a representative for Newtown.

We have seen that this regulation was reversed by the House of Commons in 1729, which lodged the privilege in the *mayor and burgessees having borough lands*.

The borough of Yarmouth sent its representatives to the parliament convened in the twenty-third of Edward I. It had a second summons in the twenty-seventh of Queen Elizabeth, from which period its returns of two members to the British senate have been very regular.

Its first charter appears to have been granted by Baldwin de Redvers, Earl of Devon, brother of Isabella de Fortibus ; which comprized nearly the same rights or privileges as the grants to Newport and Newtown. James I. who re-incorporated a multitude of the boroughs, formed this also into a regular corporation, by a charter bearing date the first of September, in the seventh year of his reign, which in effect is as follows :

“ Whereas

“ Whereas the borough of Eremuth, alias Yarmouth, in the Isle of Wight, is an ancient borough, and the mayor and burgesſes have preſcribed to have and uſe diverſe liberties and privileges, which they claim alſo under colour of charters of confirmation from ſeveral kings and queens of this realm, confirming an ancient grant made to this borough by Baldwin de Redvers, ſome time lord of this iſle; viz. the charter of confirmation under the great ſeal, in the eighth year of the reign of King Edward I. a like charter granted in the eighteenth of Henry VI. another charter of the fixth of Edward IV. and another charter of the ſecond of Elizabeth: And whereas the ſaid mayor and burgesſes, and their predeceſſors, have always paid to the king and his predeceſſors, for the ſaid privileges, immunities, and liberties, the fee-farm of twenty ſhillings yearly; and whereas it appears by the records in the Remembrancer's office in the Exchequer, in the ſecond year of Richard II. that the town of Yarmouth was entirely burned by the enemy, and its inhabitants greatly impoverished;

poverished ; and whereas the said town lies near to a good harbour for shipping, and, for that reason, King Henry VIII. caused a castle to be built, since which the town is better inhabited than before ; and it is to be hoped that it will yet be more filled with people, for increasing the strength of the island, and guarding the said castle, if his majesty would vouchsafe to regrant them their liberties and immunities : that the said mayor and burgeses, esteeming the charters before-mentioned insufficient to authorize them in the using and enjoying the said liberties and immunities, have petitioned the king, to make, confirm, and new create them a body politic and corporate, with such franchises as shall be by the king thought expedient ; that the king therefore being willing to settle the rules for the government of the said borough and the people there, declares it to be a free borough ; and that they shall be a body politic and corporate, by the name of mayor and burgeses of Yarmouth, in the Isle of Wight, with capacity to purchase, &c. to grant, &c. to plead or to be impleaded, and to have

have a common seal ; that there shall be twelve chief burgesſes to be the common council of the borough ; that, out of theſe, one ſhall be choſen mayor of the borough ; that they ſhall have power to make laws, ſtatutes, and orders, for the government of the borough and its officers ; that the burgesſes of the ſaid borough ſhall continue for life, excepting any of them ſhall be removed for reaſonable cauſe ; and on the death or removal of a chief burgeſs, the mayor and major part of the burgesſes then living ſhall elect another in his place, who ſhall be ſworn before the mayor and major part of the chief burgesſes ; that the mayor and ſteward of the borough ſhall hold the courts of the ſaid borough ; that they ſhall hold a view of frank pledge of all inhabiting and reſident in the ſaid borough, and to redreſs abuſes in the ſame ; the mayor and burgesſes are empowered to elect and conſtitute a ſteward, a common clerk, and a ſergeant at mace, to continue during the pleaſure of the mayor and burgesſes ; that the mayor and burgesſes ſhall have all the fines, forfeitures, and profits

profits of the courts, which they shall have power to levy, by their own officers by distress: they have also a grant of strays, and the goods of felons, within the limits of the borough: a market is granted to the town, to be kept every Wednesday; and a fair to be held yearly, viz. on St. James's day, the eve before, and the day after, together with a court of pie-powder, &c. with all the profits and emoluments belonging to such markets, fairs, and courts: a special licence and authority are given to the mayor and burgeses, to purchase and hold to them and burgeses for ever any manors, lands, &c. not holden of the king *in capite*, or by knight's service, not exceeding the value of twenty pounds per annum, the statute of mortmain notwithstanding; and licence is also given for any person, &c. to grant and alien to the said mayor and burgeses, under the like restriction, all liberties, privileges, franchises, and immunities, which the borough has held and enjoyed, by reason or colour of grants by the king or any of his predecessors, or by any other persons made heretofore, are confirmed;

saving

saving and reserving out of this grant, the castle of Yarmouth, its ditches, trenches, and limits, wherein the said mayor and burgessees have no power or authority to enter: they are to pay the fee-farm of *twenty shillings* yearly, at the feast of St. Michael; a clause is added to indemnify them from all prosecutions for any liberties or franchises used, had, or usurped by them, before the date of this charter, and no fine is to be paid to the Hanaper office for it.*

Yarmouth had the honor of entertaining Charles II. in the year 1671. He spent a short time in this town, at a house built entirely for his accommodation, by Sir Robert Holmes; it has many years since been converted into an inn; and, blending the memorial of its having lodged a royal visitor, with a compliment to the reigning family, is now called the George. The monarch in this excursion landed at Gurnard's Bay, and in his way to Yarmouth passed through the forest of Parkhurst, over a road which Sir Robert Holmes had formed on purpose to accommodate him.

* Sir Richard Worsley's Hist. p. 159.

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The circumstances of this visit are tenaciously remembered by the inhabitants of the island, whose beautiful residence has had the pleasure of receiving only three of its monarchs since the conquest,—King John, Henry VIII. and Charles II.

CHAP. II.

OF THE LORDS OF THE ISLAND; THEIR POWER,
RIGHTS, AND FRANCHISES; AND OF
THE KNIGHTON COURT.

THE barons of the feudal ages enjoyed on their own demesnes an authority almost regal. The lords of the Isle of Wight, by the grant of Henry I. became possessed of all those rights in the amplest degree, with which the higher fees were endowed. They had their own courts of judicature for the trial of all offences, save those of treason and murder. They nominated their own bailiffs, constables, and all other petty officers. They executed the office of coroner throughout the whole island. They had the return of all the king's writs. They possessed a chace, now called

Parkhurst Forest; a fence-mouth there, and in other places; and a free warren on the East side of the river Medina; together with wrecks, waifs, and strays. The tenants of the island were chargeable in aid to them alone;† and held their lands as of the castle of Carisbrooke. By the regulations of their tenure, the tenants were bound to assist (distinct from their customary aids) in the charge of making the eldest son of the lord a knight; of marrying his daughter; and of paying the ransom for his liberation should he be made a prisoner. They were also obligated to defend the castle of Carisbrooke for forty days, at their own costs and charges, whenever it might be attacked; and to attend the lord both on his coming to the island, and departing from it. Moreover, the lord enjoyed the right of wardship over the whole island; a right which placed every heir that was a minor under his

† They paid no regular annual tax to the lord; but as often as the king levied a scutage upon him for the island, so often his feudatories contributed each his settled proportion towards the payment of it.

protection;

protection; that conferred on him the rents and profits of the estate during the minority, and enabled him to give the ward in marriage to whomsoever he pleased.

Many are the traces of this feudal government, which subsist to the present day, both in the Isle of Wight, and every other part of the kingdom; one remnant, however, deserves particular mention, as it formerly constituted one of the greatest privileges which the lord of this district enjoyed.

This is the *Knight's Court*, or *Knighton Court*, as it is now called, or the *Curia Militum*, as it was anciently styled. It received this appellation from the circumstance of those who held a knight's, or part of a knight's fee in capite, being the judges in this tribunal; where they gave judgment according to the Norman mode of trial, without a jury. This principle of decision, so contrary to the spirit of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence, leads one to apprehend the Knighton Court had its origin during the period of William Fitz-Osborne's possessing the
Isle

Isle of Wight, who modelled it after the court of judicature in his own country.

In the year 1626 an attempt was made to improve and enlarge the jurisdiction of this court, when the following representation of its form and extent, was transmitted to Lord Conway, then governor of the island.

Knighten Court.

“ 1. It hath been always kept by the captain's steward of the island, or his substitute, by virtue of the captain's patent, and by no other particular patent, for aught we know.”

“ 2. It hath been always kept in the town-hall of Newport, on the Monday every three weeks, unless that day happen a festival day, and then it is adjourned for six weeks.”

“ 3. It hath jurisdiction throughout the whole island, the corporation of Newport excepted.”

“ 4. It holdeth plea of all actions of debt and trespass, under the value of forty shillings, and upon replevins granted by the steward or his substitute that keeps the court.”

“ 5. The

“ 5. The proceſs in actions of debt and trefpaſs, are ſummons, attachments, and diſtringas, to bring the defendant to appear, which if he do in perſon, he muſt confeſs the action, or elſe he is condemned by default; if by an attorney, he is admitted one eſſoine, if he prays it, and the next court muſt appear, or be condemned by default. And in actions upon replevins, if the defendant appear not in the three firſt courts, he is condemned by default: and in theſe actions upon replevins, no eſſoine is admitted.”

“ 6. The pleadings are Engliſh bills and answers; and if the caſe require, replications and rejoinders.”

“ 7. All the actions are entered, proſecuted, and pleaded, by certain attornies allowed in that court.”

“ 8. The actions of debt are tried by proof of plaintiff or defendant, or the defendant's wager of law with two hands, if he pray it, and in trefpaſs by proof only.”

“ 9. All the actions are adjudged by the court, without jury; which it will be conceived will

will be better with jury, as in other courts of record, if the value of actions be increased."

" 10. The judges are freeholders, which hold of his majesty's castle of Carisbrooke; whereof there are known to the steward not above eighteen. The which freeholders, for their better ease, have been appointed by the captain of the isle to sit by four or five at a court by turns; but some being aged and impotent, one under age, some living out of the isle, and some of the rest being negligent of that service, there hath been much defect in their attendance; which is to the great prejudice of the court, and hindrance of the people, by delay of trials."

" Therefore, under favor, we conceive, that a certain form of election of a certain number of judges, of other sufficient men of the country, shall be added; and a strict order taken for their due attendance will be very necessary, especially if the value of actions be raised: and that if there be not an especial restraint of removing actions in that court triable from
thence

thence into higher courts, that court will do little more good than it doth already."

This statement being delivered to the privy council, orders were immediately issued by the Lord Treasurer, Viscount Grandison, to the attorney-general, to prepare forthwith a grant for extending the jurisdiction of the Knighten Court, "to all cases whatsoever, civil or criminal, under the value of twenty pounds, provided that the same extend not to the life, member, or freehold of any of the inhabitants." Notwithstanding this mandate, however, the business was not proceeded in; and the jurisdiction of the Knighten Court, and mode of decision therein, continue the same as before.†

† Sir R. Worsley's Hist. p. 81. et infra.

CHAP. III.

OF THE WARDENS, CAPTAINS, AND GOVERNORS OF THE ISLAND.

AS soon as the Isle of Wight became the property of the crown, Edward I. appointed a warden to regulate its concerns.

Indeed, during its continuance in the De Redvers family, the reigning monarch had twice, when the owner was a minor, and his property therefore (according to the feudal system) became temporarily vested in the crown, appointed a warden, who exercised the rights of the lord, during the nonage of the heir. The first instance of this, happened in the first of Henry III. when Walleran de Ties received

ceived the custody of the island in the minority of Baldwin the third, grandson of William de Vernon. The second took place in the thirteenth of Henry III. when Savery de Mauleon, or de Malo Leone, was appointed to the office in the minority of Baldwin the fourth.

In the year 1293, Edward I. constituted John Fitz-Thomas warden of the island; who enjoyed also the stewardship of New Forest.

Richard de Affeton appears to have held this office in the twenty-second year of Edward I. And in the ensuing year, the Bishop of Winchester, and Adam de Gordon, were included with him in another commission for the same appointment. A record of the same year shews that William Ruffel also was warden at this time.

Sir John Lisle of Wootton was appointed to the wardenship of the island in the thirtieth of Edward I. and made captain of Carisbrooke Castle. On the accession of Edward II. he was superseded, and his brother appointed in his stead; but the latter being murdered by

one Robert Urry, in the third of Edward II. Sir John Lisle was restored to his dignity and office.

Sir Henry Ties was appointed warden under Prince Edward, in 1321; the same person probably who was beheaded in the ensuing year, for being concerned in rebellion with Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, who also lost his head.

In the eighteenth of Edward II. John de la Hufe and John Lisle were wardens of the island. Nicholas de la Felde occurs as *custos* during the same year.

In the ninth of Edward III. 1336, John de Langford of Chale, was warden of the island, and captain of Carisbrooke Castle.

In the eleventh of the same king, Theobald Russel occurs as captain general of the island.

The abbot of Quarr was appointed warden of the island in 1340; to whom was directed a writ to act in the capacity of a general officer, by arraying men, supplying arms, and erecting beacons.

Three commissioners were *elected by the inhabitants* of the island, to act as wardens, in 1341;

Sir

Sir Bartholomew Lisle, John de Langford Lord of Chale, and Sir Theobald Ruffel Lord of Yaverland.

In 1353, three other wardens are found acting at one time; Bartholomew Lisle, John de Kingston, and Henry Romyn.

John de Gatesden received a commission, as warden of the island, to array the inhabitants, in the year 1353.

In 1360, the abbot of Quarr, Theobald de Gorges, and William Dale, were appointed wardens.

In 1377, the first of Richard II. the gallant Sir Hugh Tyrrel, who, as we have before seen, defended the castle of Carisbrooke against the French, was constable of that fortress.

In the seventeenth year of Henry VI. Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, son of Henry IV. succeeded to the lordship of the island, after the decease of the Duchess of York, (grantee of it under the crown). He died in the twenty-fifth of Henry VI. and on his decease, that king immediately appointed Henry Trenchard

to the office of constable of the castle of Carisbrooke, with a salary of twenty pounds per annum; ten pounds as keeper of the forest of Parkhurst; and four-pence per day for the pay of the porter of the castle.

In the reign of Henry VI. the lordship of the island was conferred on Richard, Duke of York; who appointed one John Newport his lieutenant and steward. The behaviour of this deputy was so oppressive, that Richard removed him from the office, and appointed John Bruin in his stead.

In 1461, the first of Edward IV. the captainship of the island was conferred on Sir Geoffry Gate, for life. He surrendered it, however, in 1467, and it was given to Anthony, Lord Schales, the uncle of the king.

Early in the year 1483, Sir William Berkley was made captain of the island; and towards the close of it, Sir John Saville was appointed to the same office.

Sir Edward Woodville was entrusted with the command of the island at the accession of Henry VII.

In

In the tenth of Henry VII. Sir Reginald Bray received a grant of the island, on lease, with the castle and honor of Carisbrooke, &c. (late in the possession of George, Duke of Clarence) at the annual rent of three hundred and seven marks. On his death Sir Nicholas Wadham succeeded him; ancestor to the founder of Wadham College, Oxford.

Early in the third year of Henry VIII. Sir Nicholas Wadham died, and was succeeded by Sir James Worsley, keeper of the king's wardrobe, and master of the robes. He was constituted captain of the island for life, with a salary of six shillings and nine-pence per diem for himself, two shillings for his deputy, and sixpence each for thirteen servants; added to this was a reversionary grant of the office of constable of Carisbrooke castle, when it should become vacant, and the command of all the forts in the island. He was likewise constituted keeper of Carisbrooke forest and park, with a fee of two shillings per day. He was empowered too, to lease any of the king's houses, demesne lands, &c. within the island;

to return all writs ; to execute all proceffes ; to regulate the markets ; and take inquests as coroner.

In the year of 1538, Richard Worsley, Esq. succeeded his father in the office of captain of the Isle of Wight. He held it till 1553, when finding himself obnoxious to Queen Mary, whose principles he disliked and opposed, prudence dictated to him to resign his appointment ; in which he was succeeded by Mr. Girling, a man of low extraction, and a favorer of popery. On Mary's death, however, Richard Worsley was reinstated in his office. In the commission which he received on this occasion instructions were contained, to instruct the inhabitants of the island in the use of harquebusses, and to introduce them there ; orders which he immediately obeyed.

In 1565 the command of the island was bestowed on Edward Horsey, Esq. afterwards knighted. His memory is held in some esteem by the sportsmen of the island, who attribute the great plenty of hares, and other game found there at present, to the attention bestowed on them during his government.

Sir

Sir George Carey succeeded Sir Edward Horsey. He appears to have been the first captain of the island who assumed the name of *governor*; a circumstance that gave great disgust to the inhabitants, who conceived the title to be an arbitrary and improper one, in a free country.

Henry, Earl of Southampton, succeeded Sir George Carey in the first year of James I. His patent styles him Captain of all the Isle of Wight; Captain of the castle of Carisbrooke, and all other castles and forts within the said isle; also Constable of the castle of Carisbrooke, Warden of the forest of Parkhurst; Steward, Surveyor, and Receiver of all the lands, woods, revenues, &c. of the crown, within the island. His affability, attention, and hospitality, gave extraordinary satisfaction to the inhabitants, and raised the island to an enviable and flourishing state. He won the affections of the gentry by mixing in their diversions; and twice every week threw off the cumbrous state of the governor at a public bowling-green and ordinary,

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where

where the knights and gentlemen met for amusement and relaxation.

This popular nobleman died in December 1625, and was succeeded by John, Lord Conway; who was afterwards made Secretary of state and President of the council.

On his decease in 1631, Richard, Lord Weston, afterwards created Earl of Portland, was constituted Captain of the Isle of Wight; an office which was vacated by his death in 1634.

Jerom, Earl of Portland, succeeded his father. The parliament, as we have before seen, removed this nobleman in 1642, and appointed in his place Philip, Earl of Pembroke.

In 1647, Colonel Hammond was Governor of the Isle of Wight, and held it for two years. It was during this interval, that the unfortunate Charles I. took refuge here, vainly flattering himself he should find a friend in the governor, as his uncle Doctor Henry Hammond was at that time his confidential chaplain. But the spirit of fanaticism, the vice of the times, and

and the suggestions of interest, prevailed on the colonel to forget the ties of duty and of gratitude; and to give himself up implicitly to the republican party. Instead therefore of finding a refuge in the island, as he expected, Charles soon after his arrival there, began to feel the restrictions of confinement; which gradually became more severe and ignominious, until he was seized by the army, on the twenty-ninth of November 1648, and conducted to the scaffold that closed his unmerited sufferings.

In 1649, Colonel Sydenham succeeded Hammond in the government of the island. He was brother to the celebrated physician of that name,

In 1660, when Charles was restored to the throne of his ancestors, Thomas, Lord Culpeper, received the government of the island; we have before seen that he rendered himself very unpopular in this office, which he resigned in 1667, and was succeeded by Admiral Sir Robert Holmes, a gallant naval officer. He is styled Governor and Captain of the island, in his patent, and of the castles and forts therein. He died in

1692, and was interred in a vault in Yarmouth church, where a very elegant marble monument is raised to his memory.

John, Lord Cutts, one of the most gallant soldiers of his time, and a great favorite of King William, succeeded Sir Robert Holmes in the government of the island. He resided much at Carisbrooke, where he gave very superb and frequent entertainments. He died in 1707, and was succeeded by

Charles, Marquis of Winchester, afterwards Duke of Bolton; Warden of the New Forest; and Lord Lieutenant of the counties of Southampton and Dorset. As this nobleman resided very little in the island, it was judged prudent to appoint a lieutenant-governor, under him, by royal commission, with a salary of twenty shillings per diem; an office that was conferred on Colonel Morgan.

The Duke of Bolton was removed in 1710, and General John Richmond Webb appointed governor in his room. This officer immortalized his name, by defeating with a band of seven thousand

thousand men, upwards of twenty thousand French, at Wynendale, under the command of General La Motte.

William, Lord Cadogan, afterwards an earl, succeeded General Webb in 1716. He too was a gallant soldier of the great Duke of Marlborough's school; and after the death of that commander, was appointed General and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Forces, Master-general of the Ordnance, and Colonel of the first regiment of foot guards. On his decease, in August 1726,

Charles, Duke of Bolton, was appointed Governor and Vice-admiral; but being removed from his offices in 1733, he was succeeded by

John, Duke of Montagu; who scarcely held the office a twelvemonth, and was succeeded by

John, Lord Viscount Lymington, (soon after created Earl of Portsmouth) in 1734.

Charles, Duke of Bolton was reinstated in 1742, but soon afterwards resigned his offices, when

John,

John, Earl of Portsmouth, was again made Governor of the Isle of Wight; this happened the twenty-second of February 1745.

Thomas, Lord Holmes, on the death of Lord Portsmouth in 1762, succeeded to this office; which he enjoyed but a short time, dying in July 1764. He was succeeded by

Hans Stanley, Esq. who was removed in 1766, and

Harry, Duke of Bolton, appointed governor in his room; but owing to a fluctuation in the cabinet, this nobleman was dismissed from the appointment, and in the year 1770,

The Right Honorable Hans Stanley was again nominated to it. He died in 1780, when the Right Honorable Sir Richard Worsley, Bart. one of his Majesty's most honorable privy council, succeeded to the offices of Governor, Vice-admiral, &c. of the Isle of Wight. In the year 1787, these were conferred on

The Right Honorable Thomas Orde, the present governor.

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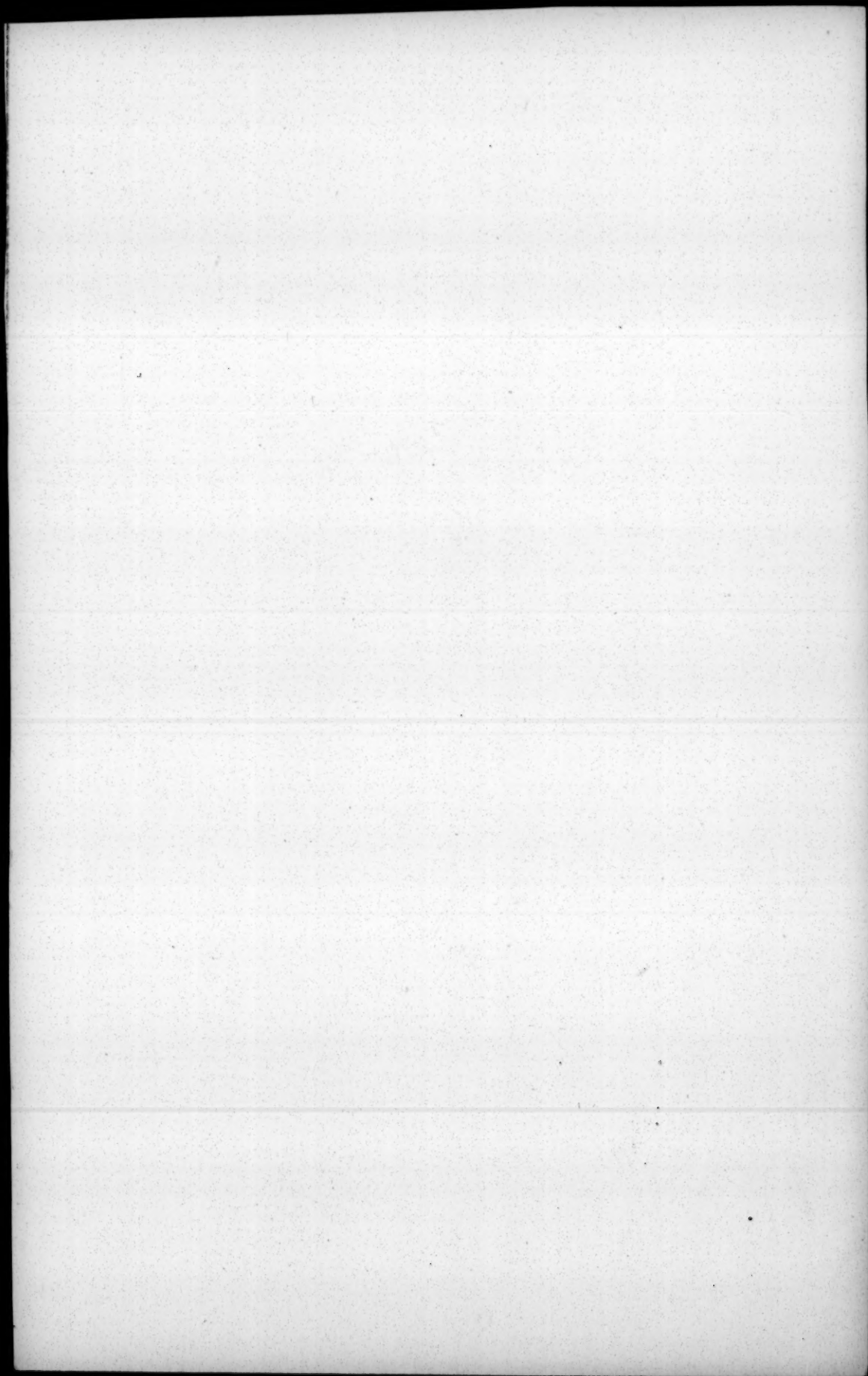




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THE
NATURAL HISTORY
OF THE
ISLE OF WIGHT.

“A man need not to say, What is this? Wherefore is that? for He hath made all things for their uses.”*

“ὅτι ἐγώ γε
Ἡς γαίης δυναμαὶ γλυκερωτερον αλλο ἰδεσθαι.”†

CHAP. I.



GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLAND; CLIMATE; SOIL; TIMBER; RIVERS; SPRINGS; INHABITANTS; DOWNS; AND CURIOUS PARTICULARS RELATING TO THEM.

THE Isle of Wight is situated on the coast of Hampshire, nearly midway between the two counties of Dorset and Suffex. It is separated from the main land, by a strait, or arm of the sea, of unequal breadth; being not more than one mile over at the narrowest part, towards the

* Ecclesiasticus.

† Hom. Odyss.

Western extremity; and nearly seven miles across at the Eastern end. The form of the island is rhomboidal; measuring twenty-two miles and an half from the Eastern to the Western angle; and thirteen miles from the Northern to the Southern one: its superficial contents may be computed at one hundred and five thousand acres. It is divided into two Hundreds, called East and West Medine; and contains thirty parishes. Its inhabitants we may estimate at eighteen thousand seven hundred. The face of the country is in general very beautiful, as it possesses all those ingredients, which, properly combined, form *picturesque scenery*; wood, rocks, swelling hills, winding rivers, and rich vales.

The *climate* is pleasant and salubrious, highly favorable to vegetation, which is here generally forwarder than in any other parts of England, if we except the Southern coast of Cornwall. The profusion of myrtles to be seen, for the production of which it has been long famous, evince there is a genial mildness in the air, approaching

to the softness of more Southern climates; and there can be no doubt, that some of the hardier plants of those parts might be cultivated here with success, would the inhabitants bend their attention to the rearing of such exotics. It might then literally exhibit the riches of the Italian soil.

“ Hic ver purpureum, varios hic flumina circum
Fundit humus flores: hic candida populus antro
Imminet, et lentæ texunt umbracula vites.”

Being, however, very hilly, the island is subject to that frequent rain which is one of the most unpleasant circumstances attending mountainous countries. The vapours are attracted by the long range of lofty hills which stretch from East to West the whole length of the island, and in the colder months, involve the parts beneath them in almost perpetual gloom and moisture. Yet this circumstance does not appear to affect the general health of the inhabitants residing in the immediate neighbourhood of these elevations; notwithstanding the vapours thus accumulated teem with putrescent

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qualities,

qualities, which I am informed, are sometimes so powerful as to taint, in a very few hours, any kind of meat in the houses immediately under the hills. This fact is most frequently experienced in the vicinity of St. Boniface and Steephill.

The *soil* of the island differs extremely in different parts; but generally speaking, is a strong and loamy earth, admirably adapted to the purposes of agriculture. It often exhibits a remarkable variety in a small district of ground; as in the parish of Brading, (towards the Eastern extremity), where the following diversities appear; in the South part, a free kind-working earth, mixed with a small proportion of sand; in the West, a light loam mixed with chalk; and in the North and East parts, a stiff clay, scarcely yielding to the operations of husbandry. The fertility of the island is almost proverbial; it having, long since, been said to produce more in one year, than its inhabitants could consume in eight. An improved husbandry has increased this fertility; and from what I
have

have been able to collect, we may fairly estimate its annual produce to be at least twelve times as much as its yearly consumption.

Timber was formerly extremely plentiful in the island, but the inhabitants have had so good a market for it, at Portsmouth Dock, and the other different yards in its neighbourhood, that few extensive woods are now to be seen.* Improvident of the future, they have omitted to plant, in proportion to their cutting down; and consequently, there being no young trees to supply the place of the old ones, in a few years the Isle of Wight will be entirely robbed of its timber, and a great part of its present beauty also. The powerful reason, which perhaps has prevented the proprietors of land in this spot (and, indeed, operates with most individuals throughout the kingdom) from encouraging the growth of oak on their estates, is, the more profitable, and quick returns made to them by keeping land in an arable state. To bring this noble tree to maturity, no less than one hun-

* Of what remains, the oak and elm flourish most.

dred years are required; and it can hardly be expected, that the man of small property should forego the intermediate profits arising from his land, in an uncertain expectation of advantage to his family, at a distance of time to which he can scarcely extend his ideas of interest. Besides, it is well known that the oak requires the strongest, finest, and deepest soil for its culture; which being the most lucrative for husbandry, it is not extraordinary, that individuals not burthened with affluence, should apply it to other purposes than raising timber. These reasons, however, for neglecting the plantation of oak, though applying forcibly enough to the farmer, or landlord of small property, certainly lose great part of their effect with respect to possessors of extensive estates. To them, the inconvenience of appropriating a few acres to the purpose of planting timber, would scarcely be felt; the expences attending it would not be regarded; the loss of the intermediate profits arising from the land, would be trifling; and as large estates are frequently entailed,

entailed, or continued in the same family for a long series of years, the planter of the *present century*, might reasonably build upon the prospect of his descendent enjoying the fruits of his labors in the *next*.

For government to interfere at all with the management or use of private property, by *enforcing* in any way the planting of oak, (a practice adopted by parliament in the sixteenth century) would now be justly deemed a trespass on one of the most sacred rights of the subject; but what it cannot *compel*, it might perhaps *allure* to, by holding out honors, pecuniary rewards, or other stimuli, to incite and encourage the proprietors of land to cultivate this valuable tree, and thereby to provide for the future navies of our country.

What timber remains, is chiefly found in the central, and Eastern parts of the island. The noble woods of Sir John Barrington, Bart. at Swainston, whose house is embosomed in them, are of great extent, and contain many magnificent and valuable trees. Those of Wootton and

Quarr

Quarr present a fine sylvan scene to the eye, covering a superficies of eleven hundred acres. In the parish of Whippingham, also, on the Eastern side of the river Medina, some valuable timber may be seen.

The principal *rivers* of the island are, the *Medina*, the *Yar*, and *Wootton* river. The spreading mouth of the first forms an ample and secure harbour; and its stream, after it contracts, and winds into the heart of the island, rolls its waters through some very agreeable quiet scenery, presenting a pleasing contrast to the bustle and confusion of the port.

Wootton river, also, when the tide is high, is rendered extremely beautiful by the noble woods which descend quite to the water's edge, and cast their shades athwart it.

In the *Yar* there is nothing striking or picturesque.

The *springs* are in general pure and crystalline; particularly those that have been filtered through the vast strata of chalk, with which the island

island abounds.* They are plentiful in most parts, and on the Southern coast form a pleasing accompaniment to the wild scenery of the place, by pouring forth their treasures in innumerable little cascades, pellucid as crystal, which fall from rock to rock, and gratify the ear by their murmurs, and the eye by their sparkling brilliancy.

The *inhabitants* of the island are not distinguished by any local characteristics from their countrymen on the main land; but are a vigorous, healthy, and active race. They fall naturally into the three general divisions of, gentry, yeomanry, and laboring poor.

The first class blend simplicity with refinement, and are at once hospitable and urbane. They live together in a friendly reciprocation of good offices; and strengthen their harmony by

*.The water which has undergone this natural percolation, is so perfectly free from impurity, that it has frequently been carried to the tropics, and brought back entirely sweet.

frequent

frequent social meetings, and the pleasures of the chace.

The yeomanry form a very respectable class of people; renting, in general, estates from one hundred pounds to four hundred, per annum. They are excellent farmers, and bear the character of kind, benevolent masters.

The feeling and reflecting mind cannot but receive particular pleasure in contemplating the condition of the third division of inhabitants, the laboring poor; a description of people who, in other parts, are too often involved in want and wretchedness. Among the laborers of the island, a general appearance of content and decency does away the ideas of poverty and misery. They all seem comfortable and happy. Their dwellings are neat, snug, and cleanly; to each of which is attached a little garden, kept in nice order, and planted with potatoes. Their manners are civil, inoffensive, and incorrupted by those vices which are generally found amongst the lower ranks of people in the neighbourhood of great towns.

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The above character attaches to the laborers *in general*, throughout the island, but applies perhaps more particularly to those of the rocky and mountainous regions of the South, who are chained, as it were, to their native hills, and have not been vitiated by foreign communication. It is about Steephill, Undercliff, and their neighbourhood that the poet's description assumes reality.

“ Tho’ poor the peasant’s hut, his feasts tho’ small,
He sees his little lot the lot of all;
Sees no contiguous palace rear its head,
To shame the meanness of his humble shed;
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal,
To make him loathe his vegetable meal:
But calm and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each with contracting, fits him to the soil.
Chearful at morn he wakes from short repose,
Breasts the keen air and carols as he goes;
With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
Or drives his vent’rous plough-share to the steep.”

“ At night returning, every labour sped,
He sits him down the monarch of a shed;
Smiles by his chearful fire, and round surveys
His children’s looks, that brighten at the blaze;
While his lov’d partner, boastful of her hoard,
Displays the cleanly platter on the board.”

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It is, however, much to be lamented, that no pains seem to have been taken, in imparting *useful knowledge* to this honest, and industrious class of people. When we look into other parts of the kingdom, and see the success that has attended one of the noblest plans of general improvement among the lower ranks of society, ever suggested, the establishment of *sunday schools*, by means of which, the morals of the poor are bettered, their manners civilized, and valuable instruction is imparted to them; we cannot but regret, that similar advantages are not held out to the laboring poor of the Isle of Wight. Both policy and morals dictate and enforce the adoption of this excellent system. To impart instruction to the ignorant, is confessedly the duty of the higher and better informed ranks; and I believe no one will assert, that fulfilling this obligation has a tendency to render those instructed, less valuable members of society than they were, before their emancipation from profound and stupid ignorance. I would not take upon me to determine what *precise degree* of knowledge it may be necessary to afford to the lower ranks
of

of people ; but I think we may venture to say, all such information ought to be bestowed, as can tend to impress their minds with a proper sense of their obligations to God, the community, and themselves.

It would be unpardonable were we to take leave of the inhabitants, without noticing the most amiable part of them ; the *fair females* of the island. The general beauty of its women has long been one of the boasts of this part of England, and any one who possesses a taste for female charms, will readily acknowledge that the boast is neither vain nor unfounded. To what physical cause it may be ascribed, is difficult to say ; but certainly the girls of the island, of all ranks and descriptions, have an elegance of stature and beauty of countenance not to be observed (in the general, I mean), in any other particular district of Southern Britain.

It is here only that we may behold constant examples of

“ The form

Shap'd by the hand of harmony ; the cheek,
Where the live crimson, thro' the native white

Aa 2

Soft.

Soft-shooting, o'er the face diffuses bloom,
And every nameless grace ; the parted lip,
Like the red rose-bud moist with morning dew,
Breathing delight ; and, under flowing jet,
Or sunny ringlets, or of circling brown,
The neck light-shaded, and the swelling breast."

The *downs* consist of a long range of hills, stretching the whole length of the island, from the town of Brading, at the Eastern extremity, to the Needle rocks at the Western one. The whole surface of these is covered with a short, sweet herbage, which affords admirable pasture for sheep ; rendering the meat delicious, and the texture of the wool extremely fine. Some of these downs swell into very bold elevations, and unfold to the astonished vision prospects, vast, various, and sublime. The highest of them appears to be (from a late measurement) St. Boniface down, which rises about eight hundred and forty feet above the level of the ocean.

A late amiable naturalist, speaking of a range of chalk downs, in the upper part of Hampshire, resembling those of the island, has the following obser-

observation : " perhaps I may be singular in my opinion, and not so happy as to convey to you the same idea ; but I never contemplate these mountains, without thinking I perceive something analogous to *growth*, in their gentle swellings, and smooth fungus-like protuberances, their fluted sides, and regular hollows and slopes, that carry at once the air of vegetative dilatation and expansion."* The idea is novel and ingenious, and seems to be founded in truth, from certain appearances of gradual enlargement which the Isle of Wight hills have exhibited. It is a well-known fact, that, about half a century since, Shanklin down, which stands in the South-Eastern part of the island, was not to be discerned, from St. Catherine's, owing to the intervention of Week down, whose magnitude and elevation completely screened it from the eye. A gradual, but imperceptible expansion, however, of Shanklin down, has at length reared it to a greater bulk, and a greater height, (by at

* White's Nat. Hist. Selborne, p. 163.

least one hundred feet) than that of its formerly invidious neighbour.

It seems sufficiently clear, that this difference in the appearance of the two downs must have arisen rather from the *growth* of Shanklin, than the *sinking* of Week; since the latter, and all the surrounding downs, bear the same relative proportion to each other they ever did, which could not be the case, had any change taken place in its elevation or magnitude.

These downs exhibit a number of those circular marks on the grass, which Philosophy, unable herself to account satisfactorily for the phenomenon, in compliance with vulgar superstition, is content to call by the name of *fairy rings*;

“Where
At fall of eve the fairy people throng,
In various game and revelry to pass
The summer night, as village stories tell.”

These appearances are generally circular, sometimes oval, and from two to twenty feet in diameter. They may easily be discovered by
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the rankness of the grass, which forms the ring, and the number of fungi or mushrooms that cover it. Various have been the conjectures relative to the cause of this phenomenon, and none perhaps more plausible than that of Doctor Darwin, who accounts for it in the following manner :

“ The numerous flashes of lightning which occur every summer, are, I believe, generally discharged on the earth, and but seldom, if ever, from one cloud to another. Moist trees are the most frequent conductors of these flashes of lightning, and I am informed by purchasers of wood, that innumerable trees are thus cracked and injured. At other times larger parts or prominences of clouds, gradually sinking as they move along, are discharged on the moister parts of grassy plains. Now this knob or corner of a cloud, in being attracted by the earth, will become nearly cylindrical, as loose wool would do when drawn out into a thread, and will strike the earth with a stream of electricity perhaps two or ten yards in diameter. Now as a stream of electricity

tricity displaces the air it passes through, it is plain no part of the grafs can be burnt by it, but just the external ring of this cylinder, where the grafs can have access to the air, since without air nothing can be calcined. This earth, after having been so calcined, becomes a richer soil, and either fungusses or a bluer grafs for many years mark the place. That lightning displaces the air in its passage, is evinced by the loud crack that succeeds it, which is owing to the sides of the aerial vacuum clapping together when the lightning is withdrawn. That nothing will calcine without air is now well understood from the acids produced in the burning of phlogistic substances; and may be agreeably seen by suspending a paper on an iron prong, and putting it into the centre of the blaze of an iron furnace; it may be held there some seconds, and may be again withdrawn without being burnt, if it be passed quickly into the flame, and out again through the external part of it, which is in contact with the air. I know," adds the Doctor, "some circles of many yards diameter, of this kind, near

Foremark

Foremark in Derbyshire, which annually produce large white fungusses, and stronger grafts, and have done so, I am informed, above thirty years." The probability of this hypothesis will perhaps be allowed, when it is recollected that these gramineous circles are generally found upon open and exposed places, and never in *immediate contact* with trees, or any other free conductors of the electrical fluid.

CHAP. II.

OF THE ANCIENT CONNECTION OF THE
ISLE OF WIGHT WITH THE MAIN
LAND; ITS COAST; ROCKS; CA-
VERNS; CHINES, &c.

IT is now pretty generally imagined, that the island, many centuries since, was connected with, and actually made a part of, the main land. History indeed does not reach to a period previous to the existence of the present separating strait; but we have recorded accounts remaining, of the waters which formed it being so shallow, as to leave its bottom entirely dry at low water.*

Mr. Borlase has indeed endeavoured to prove, that the historian, on whose accounts this

* Diodorus Siculus, p. 347.

opinion

opinion is founded, spoke of one of the Cassiterides, a cluster of islands on the coast of Cornwall; and that *Ictis* (the island mentioned by him) can by no means be supposed to be the Isle of Wight. But his arguments do not appear to me convincing, particularly when opposed to the authorities produced by Mr. Whitaker, in favor of a contrary opinion.* The Cornish antiquary perceives a great absurdity in the Britons bringing their tin from such a distant place as the Belerian shores, to the Isle of Wight; but this apparent absurdity will vanish, if we reflect, according to my suggestion in an early part of this volume, that the Greeks of Marseilles, on their succeeding the Phœnicians in this traffic, might have prevailed on the Britons to remove the staple of this article, from the ports where it was originally shipped, to those of the Isle of Wight; since a removal of this nature would save the former a tedious, long, and dangerous voyage (in those days) through the Bay of Biscay, part of the Atlantic Ocean, the

* See his Hist. Manchester, vol. II. p. 177.

Straits of Gibraltar, and the Mediterranean Sea. The land-carriage of the tin, from Normandy to Languedoc, might be performed in the space of fifteen or eighteen days, whereas the circuitous navigation just mentioned would not be accomplished, by the unskilful sailors of that period, in less than five or six weeks. The appearance also of the Northern shore of the island, and the opposite one of Hampshire, seems to confirm the idea of an ancient junction between them; as they are both low, and their respective *strata* of soil, bear a near resemblance to each other.

The Northern coast of the island has nothing particularly interesting; being in general flat, or rising gradually into moderate elevations. It now and then, however, shoots out into little points and capes, which give a pleasing variety to it. The shore consists, for the most part, of hard gravel, or sand, but in many places is disfigured with dark-colored, submarine rocks. This littoral tameness on the North side is finely contrasted by the rude magnificence and stupendous

pendous horror of the Southern coast; which presents a great deal of awful and sublime scenery. In order to give an accurate idea of its appearance, it may not be amiss for us to survey it rather minutely, and trace the various promontories, bays, and windings, which it exhibits.

The bold cretaceous cliffs which form the Southern shore of the island, and stretch, with but few interruptions, from the Eastern to the Western extremities of it, commence on the Southern side of Bimbridge peninsula, rising abruptly into a perpendicular elevation of about four hundred feet. This lofty cliff is denominated *Culver* cliff,* from the circumstance of its being the resort of a great profusion of that small species of the wild pigeon, called by ornithologists the *Columba Saxatilis*, which delights in fixing its aerial abode in the clefts of inaccessible crags and lofty rocks. Here indeed, one would suppose, it might dwell in safety; but, alas! the daring foot of plunder braves

* The Saxon name of pigeon is *Culpe*.

even the horrors of this beetling eminence, and its fearful ledges are often visited, in the season of incubation, by him, who,

“ To the rocks
Dire clinging, gathers his ovarious food.”

This cliff affords shelter and habitations also to a particular species of *hawk*, which we shall describe in another place.

The shore now becomes suddenly very much depressed, and retires into a deep bay, called Sand-down bay, forming nearly a semi-circle of about four miles from horn to horn. The appearance of this flat beach, and of the marsh to the Northward of it, plainly indicates that the sea formerly flowed over both of them; and probably insulated the parish of Yaverland, by connecting its waters with those of Brading harbour. Towards the Western point of this bay, the shore begins to resume its wonted magnificence, leaving however its chalky appearance, and assuming a dark, ferruginous, rusty hue, (but considerably stratified) which it preserves for some distance. It here exhibits a most tremendous

dous and remarkable fissure in the earth, called Shanklin Chine; a rent occasioned by some partial earthquake, or other violent natural convulsion. From the perceptible commencement of this gaping chasm, to its termination on the shore, following the various windings of the aperture, is about eight hundred yards. Its form is capricious and irregular, somewhat resembling the lesser Greek figma; gradually increasing in depth and width, till it opens upon the sea, in a yawning of sixty yards over, and eighty-seven deep.

The rude promontory of Dunnose now presents itself, the waters of which are so deep, that first-rate men of war may approach within half a mile of its cliffs. The scenery of the shore here becomes truly wonderful. From Luccomb to Bonchurch the downs of St. Boniface heave themselves into the clouds on the right, while huge masses of disjointed rock, of all shapes, and in all directions, lie scattered in ruinous disorder below; and impress the mind with an idea of
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those tempestuous conflicts, and elemental convulsions, which shake the very foundations of nature : when

“ The gloomy woods
Start at the flash, and from their deep recess
Wide flaming out, their trembling inmates shake.
Amid Carnarvon's mountains rages loud
The repercussive roar ; with mighty crush
Into the flashing deep, from the rude rocks
Of Penmanmaur heap'd hideous to the sky,
Tumble the smitten cliffs ; and Snowden's peak
Dissolving, instant yields his wintry load.
Far seen the heights of heathy Cheviot blaze,
And Thule bellows through her utmost isles.”

From Steephill quite to Chale, a distance of five or six miles (called not improperly Undercliff or Underway), the coast preserves an appearance, equally new, striking, and magnificent. The downs now lose their regular sloping sides gently uniting with the less animated flats below them, and terminate abruptly in a steep precipice of calcareous rock, not unlike those continuous cliffs which are seen on the banks of the Wye, in the neighbourhood of Persfield. This perpendicular precipice, which almost in a
right

right line for nearly five miles, has the appearance, if we may be allowed,

“ Parva componere magnis,”

of an immense stone wall; particularly when viewed from any distance. Its height varies but little, the general elevation being about thirty or forty yards. The tract of country immediately beneath this precipitous descent, which unites with the shore, is of different breadth; from a quarter of a mile, to a mile and quarter over. It is thrown into such whimsical swellings and indentations, and lies in such romantic confusion, preserving at the same time a resemblance of parts constituting an uncouth and extraordinary whole, that I cannot help thinking it may be considered as a prodigious *land-slip*, occasioned, in distant ages, by the absorption of the foundations of this vast tract into some huge cavern or gulf below, after being sapped and undermined by subterraneous waters; an opinion which is justified by various instances of similar lapses, in other parts of the kingdom, and perhaps confirmed by the rectilinear formality of the naked, remaining cliff.

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From

From the flatness of this lengthened, natural wall, a very pleasing effect is found to be produced in many parts of Underway ; I mean that of an *echo*, or reflection of sounds, delivered loudly and distinctly. Four syllables have been known to be returned from these rocks, when uttered from their true *centrum phonicum*, which appears to be at about two hundred yards distance. Much depends however on the *state of the atmosphere*, at the period of trial, since, if it be either too rare or too dense, it will prove unsuccessful ; for in the first instance the voice is attenuated and weakened, in the other it is impeded and deadened. In a still, clear evening, at a late hour, when the air is moderately moist, and very elastic, the reverberation will be most distinct and pleasing, and would easily deceive the young and unphilosophical.

“Fortè puer, comitum seductus ab agmine fido,
Dixerat, Ecquis adest ? et, Adest, responderat Echo.
Hic stupet ; utque aciem partes divisit in omnes,
Voce, Veni, clamat magnâ. Vocat illa vocantem.”

In the singular tract of country which we have been describing, it is interesting to observe how
the

the industrious labor of the inhabitants overcomes certain circumstances of local inconvenience. Many spots of ground hereabouts lie in such intricacies, among the crags of rocks and mountains, that one would imagine their situation should secure them from the notice of the husbandman. The islanders, however, have found means to reduce all these spots to tillage; and even those which appear, from their rapid descent and whimsical inequalities, to be most incapable of being worked, yet by ploughing them sometimes in a transverse, and sometimes in an oblique direction, they make them produce heavy and abundant crops. The operation is notwithstanding a very laborious one; and I frequently remarked it was necessary for them to have five horses to perform it. These pieces of land, though thus awkwardly situated, are very valuable, and let for twenty shillings and upwards per acre.

Knowles, and the descent of St Catherine's stupendous hill, display a great deal of rude, rocky scenery; being covered with huge frag-

ments of cliff, tumbled and thrown about in the wildest confusion. On the Western side of the latter, another gaping fissure occurs, called *Blackgang chine*, a name which in some degree prepares one for the gloomy horrors of the chasm. Its sides are stratified with alternate layers of calcareous stone, and a black argillaceous earth. Through the bottom of it runs a stream of water, that after heavy rains is magnified into a copious torrent, which dashes with roaring impetuosity from one rocky fragment to another, till it reaches the mouth of the chine, down which it precipitates itself, in a noble perpendicular cascade of forty feet.

The coast exhibits from hence a continued range of cliffs of unequal height, for the distance of eight or nine miles; when it forms another extensive sinus, called *Freshwater bay*. Towards the centre of this sweeping recess, the shore again becomes flat and pebbly; and seems to offer but a poor bulwark against the thundering seas which rush in hither, when the ocean is agitated by a South-westerly wind. Nature indeed

deed appears to have here intended a division of the Western limb of the island, from the other part, having brought the spring-head of the river Yar within one hundred yards of the water's edge, and placed no obstacle to their junction in this intermediate space, but the low, pebbly beach above-mentioned, over which, in tempestuous weather, the spray of the sea easily makes its way.

The view from the bottom of Freshwater bay is extremely noble. On the left, the eye takes in the rugged descent of St. Catherine's hill, the white cliffs to the Westward of it, and three misshaped, unwieldy rocks, isolated, and detached from the land, and frowning on the waves that lash their sides. On the right, it beholds a shore covered with vast fragments of broken rock, and the commencement of those stupendous chalky elevations called Freshwater cliffs; while in front, the ocean, bounded only by the horizon, closes the scene.

This spot is also remarkable for a prodigious natural cavern, formed in the rock; to which
there

there is an approach when the tide is at ebb. It penetrates into the cliff about forty yards ; gradually sinking in height, and contracting in breadth, from the mouth to the bottom. Its largest aperture (for it has three) is a noble rude arch, spreading about twelve yards from side to side, and measuring five and twenty feet in height. The vast excavation we are now considering, like most other similar appearances in the natural world, has probably been produced by water, which is a wonderfully active agent in the secret recesses of the earth. This element, according to Doctor Goldsmith, finding subterraneous passages, and, by long degrees, hollowing the beds through which it flows, the ground above it, in time, naturally slips down closer to its surface, leaving the upper layers of earth or stone still suspended ; the ground or rock, that sinks upon the face of the water, forming thus the floor of the cavern, the ground or rock that keeps suspended, forming the roof.

At this part the shore rises into one immense chalk cliff, from four to six hundred feet in height,

height, and runs in a South-westerly direction about four miles, sometimes presenting a perpendicular elevation, at other times beetling fearfully over its excavated base. If the eye be cast down this abrupt descent, particularly during the season of incubation, it is astonished and delighted with a new and unexpected scene. Myriads of birds of various sorts and different sizes are seen, either seated on the clefts and shelvings of the rocks, or sporting in circular flights through the midway air; or floating lightly on the billows, in pursuit of their fishy prey. Meanwhile the whole sky resounds with the *rude harmony* of these winged nations; and rocks, air, and ocean present one scene of noise, bustle, and animation.*

The greater part of these *feathered clouds* are aquatic fowl, which migrate hither from the colder

* Mr. Pennant has the following amusing observation, the truth of which may be fully exemplified by a visit to Freshwater cliffs. "The notes of all the sea birds are extremely harsh or inharmonious: we have often rested under the rocks attentive to the various sounds above our

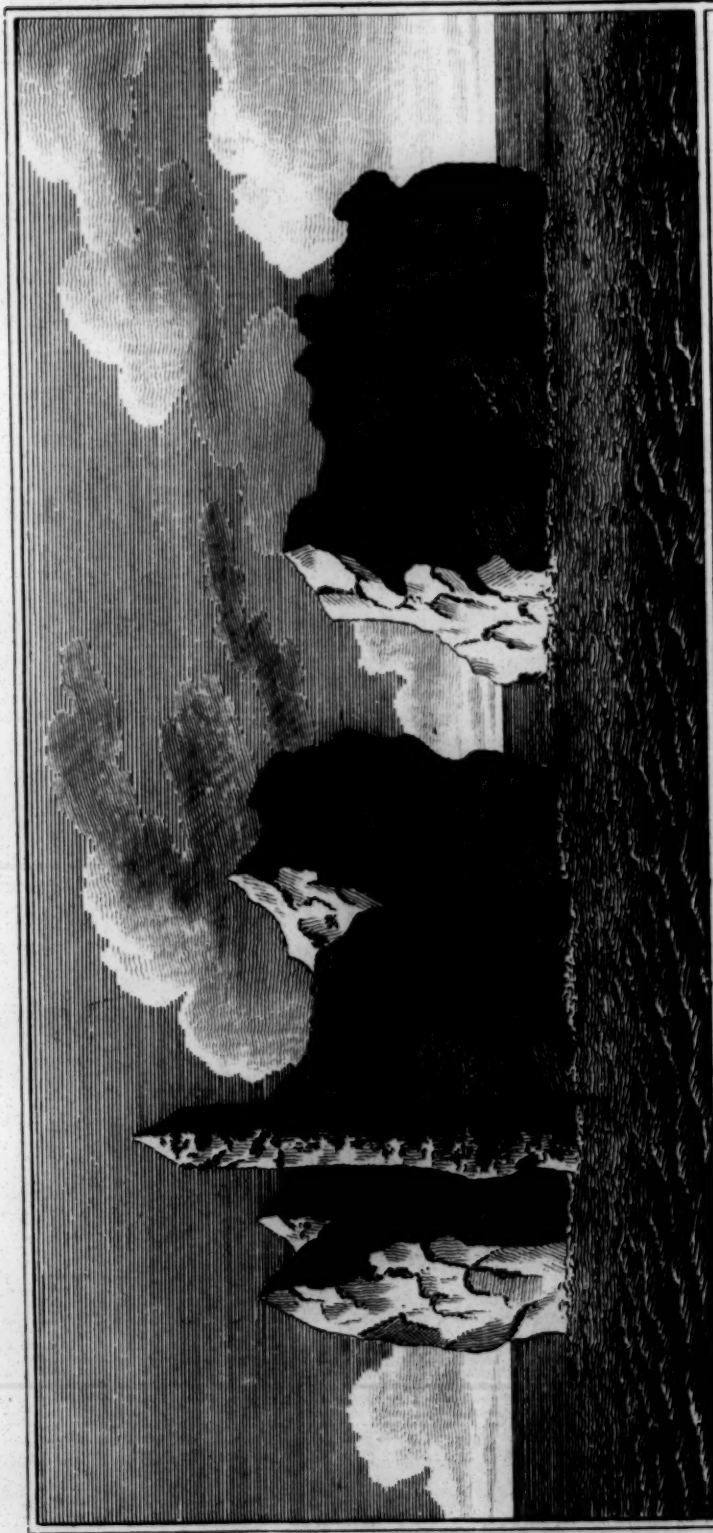
colder regions of the North, to deposit their eggs, and rear their young; of the most remarkable species we shall give an account in their proper place, but their great variety utterly precludes a particular description of all; for,

“ Who can recount what transmigrations here
Are annual made? what nations come and go?
And how the living clouds on clouds arise!
Infinite wings! till all the plume-dark air
And rude resounding shore, are one wild cry!”

The most sublime part, however, of this wonderful coast, is the Western termination of the island; a perpendicular chalk rock, scooped by the hand of Nature into an immense semi-

our heads, which, mixed with the solemn roar of the waves swelling into and retiring from the vast caverns beneath, have produced a fine effect. The sharp voice of the sea gulls, the frequent chatter of the guillemots, the loud note of the auks, the scream of the herons, together with the hoarse, deep, periodical croak of the corvorants, which serves as a bass to the rest; has often furnished us with a concert, which, joined with the wild scenery that surrounded us, afforded in a high degree, that species of pleasure which arises from the novelty, and, we may say, gloomy grandeur of the entertainment.”—British Zoology, vol. II. p. 434.

circular



View of the Needle Rocks in the Year 1760.

Bliss engraving.

circular hollow, and rearing itself six hundred feet above the pebbly shore. It is called St. Christopher's cliff. Its Northern limb is lengthened into a chain of rocks, named the *Needles*, from a lofty pointed one which formerly stood a little to the North of the remaining rocks; but (being undermined by the sea,) fell into the ocean about twenty-five years since.*

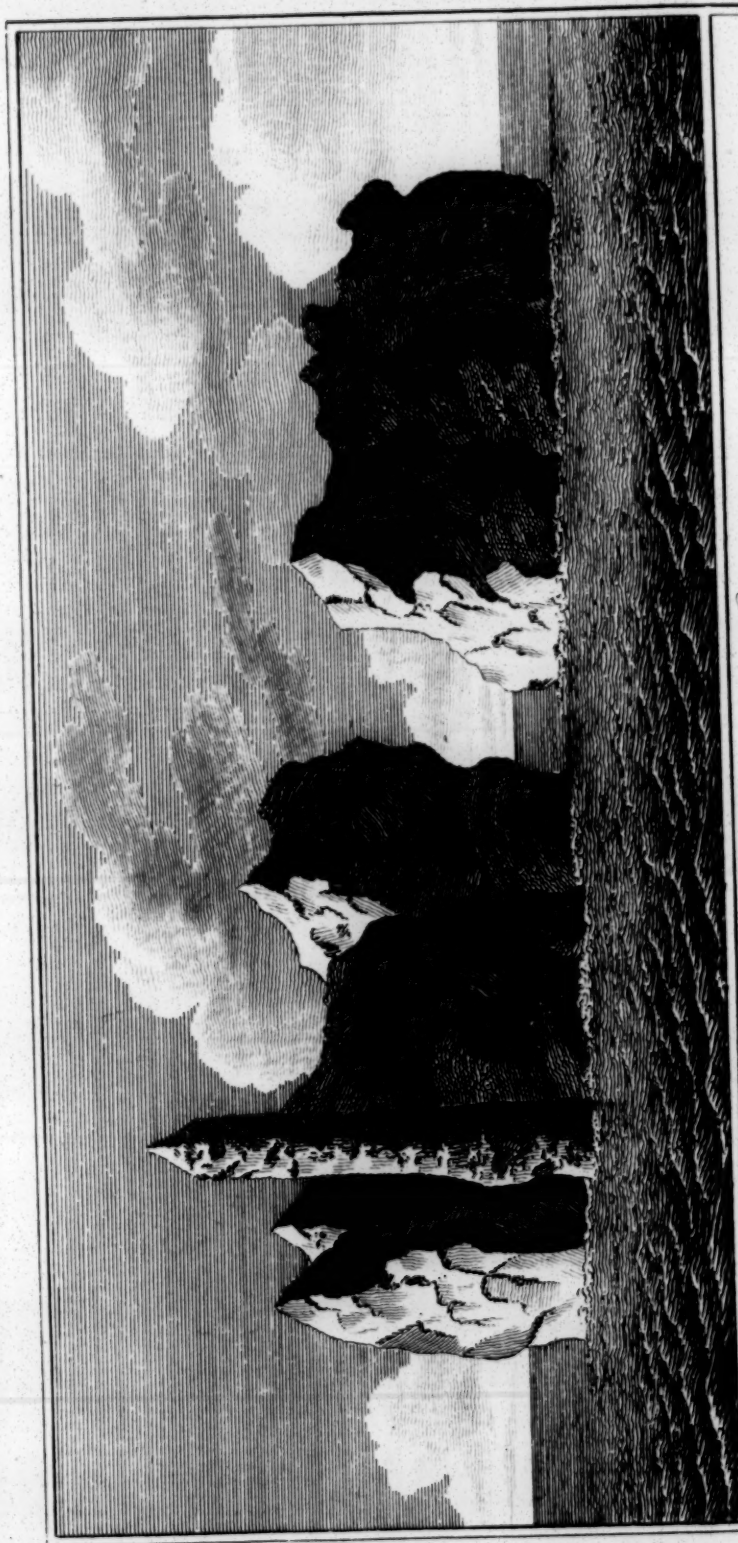
The grandeur of this scene, compared with which the mightiest works of human labor are trifling and contemptible, cannot be expressed by verbal description. To be conceived, it must be beheld; and sorry should I be for that man who, on beholding it, was not involuntarily led to a contemplation of its divine and almighty Architect; who did not feel the pious rapture of the Poet, and exclaim,

"These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good,
Almighty! thine this universal frame
Thus wond'rous fair; thyself how wond'rous then!

* The annexed plate gives a view of this singular rock, vulgarly called Lot's Wife, from its fancied resemblance to the pillar of salt, into which her improper curiosity occasioned her to be converted.

D d

Unspeakable;



View of the Needle Rocks in the Year 1760.

Hazen sculp.

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D d

Unspeakable;

Unspeakable ; who sitt'ft above these heav'ns
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works."

The chalky cliffs continue round this vast promontory, the distance of somewhat more than a mile into Alum bay, when the scene is suddenly changed ; they at once lose their white and precipitous appearance, and are converted into a gradual slope, consisting of various ochres, and sands of different colors, beautifully stratified in a very oblique direction. And here all grandeur ceases ; the hills sink gently to the shore, and nothing now occurs but flat beach or verdant declivities.

CHAP. III.

THE ZOOLOGY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT; ITS ANIMALS, REPTILES, AND FISH.

“But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee ;
and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee :”

“Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee ; and
the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.”

“Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the
Lord hath wrought this ?”

WE have hitherto considered the magnificent exhibitions of nature in the Isle of Wight : we shall now descend to her more minute but not less interesting operations. In the contemplation of caverns, rocks, and mountains, the mind is rather awed into astonishment than softened into delight : we there behold the agency of a Being of infinite power and majesty, at whose presence the “earth shakes, the heavens

Dd 2

drop,

drop, and the waters are afraid ;” but in surveying the economy of the animal and vegetable kingdoms ; the exquisite mechanism with which their individuals are formed ; the unerring instincts with which they are endued ; and the nice adaptation of their several parts to answer the purposes for which they were created ; we acknowledge the finger of a God, wise and benevolent, as he is great and powerful ; who is “ good to all the creatures of his hand ; and whose tender mercies are over all his works.”

The *fauna Vectensis* does not add much to the zoology of Hampshire. It is indeed marked by some singular *omissions* in the chain of *quadrupeds* common in every other part of England. The *fox*, who has for ages been the terror of the farmer, and the delight of the sportsman throughout Britain, was never yet found in the Isle of Wight. The harmless *badger* also, and the fetid *fitchet*, or *polecat*, are strangers to this district ; which, from the absence of these animals, and its insular situation, appears to be the best calculated for the production of game of any place
in

in Great-Britain. And indeed it has always been famous for its hares, pheasants, and partridges.

The hare of the Isle of Wight furnishes good and constant sport to the hunter during the season. It is, I think, rather smaller than its brethren on the continent, but swift and strong. The inequalities of the island make this spot an excellent residence for the animal, and give it considerable advantages over its pursuers. The long muscular hind legs which it has, are well calculated to mount the steep downs of the island with uncommon fleetness; and it not unfrequently escapes, by distancing both hunters and dogs, at these rapid ascents.

As the hare is an animal of surprizing fecundity,* and secured from the attacks of the fox,

* They breed frequently in the year, bringing forth from two to four young ones at a litter. This wise provision of nature, in making the most innocuous and esculent animals the most fruitful, was not unnoticed by the ancient naturalists. "*Benigna circa hoc natura, innocua et esculenta animalia fecunda generavit,*"—Pliny, lib. VIII. cap. lv.

and

and polecat, by the absence of these destructive vermin in this part, we may naturally suppose they would be found in very great plenty throughout the island. And indeed this was the case till within these thirty or forty years; but as a *Roman taste** for these animals has arisen amongst us, and they are considered as *tit-bits* by modern epicurism, the midnight poacher finds it well worth while to employ all his skill, and run every risk, in the capture of the hare; a practice which of course must thin the breed extremely. There remain, however, sufficient for the sport of the gentlemen of the island.

There are few disagreeable reptiles in the island. Such as occur, are found in the lower, sandy parts of it; the other spots being freed from them by the elevation and exposure of their situation. Many *vipers* indeed are met with in

* The Romans were very partial to this animal :

“ Inter quadrupedes gloria prima lepus.”——Martial.

And its shoulder was reckoned a most delicate morsel ;

“ Fecundi leporis sapiens sectabitur armos.”——Horace.

See my “*Antiquitates Culinariæ*.” Quarto, Blamire, 1791.

the chalky and stony places, and the largest I ever saw, I had nearly trodden upon, in the parish of Wootton, in the outskirts of Coombly wood, in August, 1792. Had my foot, however, come in contact with this animal, no injury could have ensued to me from the pressure, as it was utterly incapable of revenging the insult. This incapacity had been produced by its voraciousness, as was evident on an examination of the reptile. We then found that it had attempted to gorge a frog, (at least three times as large in circumference as the thickest part of its own body,) but being unable to accomplish the task entirely, one of the legs and thighs of its prey continued to depend from the viper's mouth, and effectually prevented it from closing the jaws and excluding its poison. The animal indeed (as is the case with all the serpent kind after satisfying their voracity,) was in a state of torpor, which rendered it apparently insensible of our approach or observation, and unable to express any tokens of indignation when we destroyed it. On measuring it when dead, it was found to be exactly twenty-nine inches long.

On

On contemplating this animal, one of the most remarkable circumstances relating to it, appears to be the faculty it thus possesses, of extending its jaws, throat, and stomach so considerably, as to render them capable of admitting a substance much thicker than any part of its body. In the singular conformation of its parts, to accomplish this purpose, the wisdom of providence strikingly manifests itself. The head of the viper is broad and flat, having a wide mouth of very uncommon and disproportionate magnitude. This permits the jaws to gape to a great extent; but the aperture would still be insufficient for the admission of the animal's prey, were not the capability of its distention increased by the following nice contrivance. The jaws are not united together at the bottom, as in the human mouth, by a process resembling a pair of hinges; but connected by a strong muscle, the elasticity of which is such, as to keep the features firm when not in action, and to allow their being stretched to an immoderate extent, when the size or form of the animal's food requires it. The gullet or throat receives the aliment from the
mouth,

mouth, and being very capacious and elastic, easily accommodates itself to the magnitude and figure of it. From hence a part only immediately finds its way into the stomach, a receptacle by no means so large as the gullet; here it continues till it be reduced by the action of digestion into chyle, which going off in the natural way, affords room for the remaining parts to be absorbed by the stomach, and digested.

These reptiles are viviparous, but fortunately for mankind not very prolific.* The poison of their bite is fully established; and the effects of it, if there be no speedy application to the wound, extremely frightful, and many times fatal. The simplest and most ready cure, in case of an injury from a viper, is a brisk fomentation of the wounded limb with warmed fallad oil; and taking about a jill of the same liquid internally.

* That is, as Aristotle expresses it, “Εν αυτοῖς (αὐτὸς) ὡτοκεῖ το τέλειον ὄον, ἐξὼ δὲ ὡτοκεῖ.”—De Gen. Animal. lib. III. cap. ii. “*Within them they bear a perfect egg, (wherein the young one is contained) but they bring forth their young alive.*” They produce from six to ten at a time; copulate in May, and are about three months in gestation.

The only insect of any curiosity, which my occasional walks through the island have given me an opportunity of discovering, is the *gryllus talpa*, or mole-cricket. The character and manners of this little creature, which is perfectly inoffensive, are well deserving notice, particularly as its homely, and indeed hideous figure, are apt to excite emotions of dread and abhorrence, neither of which need be entertained against it. The only one I have seen in this part of Hampshire occurred in a wet meadow in the heart of the island. It had been dug up by a lad who was grouting for earth-worms; and had filled him with astonishment and apprehension. The spade was just lifted for dividing the harmless insect in twain, when my presence and intreaty prevented the meditated blow. On examining this insect, it appeared to be of a very dark brown color, and little more than two inches in length. Its body was scaly; furnished with two long, pointed wings, and as many hairy tails. The most remarkable parts about it, however, were the fore-feet, which have some resemblance

to a human hand, and are admirably formed for making those subterraneous excavations wherein the animal resides, and deposits its eggs. Strong, webbed, and a little incurvated, the mole-cricket works with its paws at a prodigious rate, and will burrow its way through a whole ridge of leguminous plants, (of the roots of which it is very fond) in the course of a single night. With these instruments, also, its neat habitation (which is a room about the size of an hen's egg) is quickly formed, and guarded with various winding passages, and curious approaches to it. This domicilium is generally, in the summer time, placed within six inches of the surface of the ground, and herein the female lays her eggs, from one hundred to one hundred and fifty ; but towards winter, instinct, ever faithful to its office, informs the little being that in order to secure his tender offspring he must get deeper into the soil, and retire from the influence of the frost. Again therefore he sets to work, and in a short time completes with his little webbed feet, a commodious hybernaculum, about fourteen inches be-

low the surface of the ground. Hither he retires with his family, and patiently waits for the return of genial suns, and warmer seasons, when he again takes possession of his summer abode.

The chief food of the mole-cricket consists of roots and vegetables, for which he sometimes travels at night, by the assistance of his wings, to a considerable distance. Before morning he generally returns to his subterraneous habitation, and, wonderful to tell ! is found (by the minute investigations of naturalists and anatomists,) to be employed there during the day chiefly in *ruminating*, or chewing the cud.

What purposes these little, but curious insects may answer in the scale of creation, we cannot at present apprehend, and shall perhaps ever remain ignorant of them. That, however, they fulfil certain ends, and those beneficial ones, cannot be doubted ; as they are the creatures of an Artist who made nothing in vain, and who formed every *part* to assist and co-operate towards the good of the *whole*. Viewed in this light, even the mole-cricket becomes a source
of

of edification; since it may at least serve to humble the pride of *human knowledge*, by exemplifying the truth of the Philosopher's observation; *Ea quæ scimus sunt pars minima eorum quæ ignoramus.*

The *fish* found on the coast of the island are chiefly such as frequent the Southern shores of Britain. Now and then, indeed, these innoxious tribes are disturbed by the *shark*, who is either brought from the Baltic, or the tropics. In these cases he comes,

“Lur'd by the scent
Of steaming crouds, of rank disease, and death.”

following vessels, the crews of which are unhealthy, and afford him luxurious meals by their occasional dissipation. Sharks have been shot in the strait that separates the island from the opposite shore, and been seen even within the harbour of Cowes. They make, however, but a short stay in this neighbourhood; and either return to the regions from whence they came, or go more to the Westward, in search of the droves of pilchards on the Cornish coast.

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The *porpesse* also is perpetually seen on the coasts of the island, "tempesting the deep" with its unwieldy gambols. It is a very disgusting fish to the eye, being almost black in color, with a head like a hog, and from three to six feet in length.

During the whiting and herring season, it is very amusing to watch these animals in pursuit of their food, which is composed of the smaller fish; and to remark the various arts by which they accomplish the great end of satisfying their voracity. An excellent naturalist* compares their exertions, at this time, to those of a pack of hounds after a fox; and indeed there is a great resemblance in the operations of both. Their eagerness also, when thus engaged, equals that of the dog, and frequently renders the porpesse so blind to its safety, that he will dash headlong upon shoals from which he never can recede, rather than give up the pursuit. It is either by an accident of this nature, or by an injury or indisposition which prevents him keeping the seas,

* Pennant, Brit. Zoology, vol. III.

that

that the porpesse is now and then forced on our shores, and found either dead or expiring. When this happens, the carcase proves to be no contemptible treasure to the finder; for the quantity of fat with which the flesh is surrounded, being well boiled, is converted into a very excellent and valuable oil. The lean also of this fish is in some parts of the world used for the table; but proves, to a palate not habituated to it, a very rank and disagreeable viand.

The mutations of fashions and tastes, however, in the line of eating, have been not a little whimsical, even in our own country; since the porpesse, which we now turn from with loathing and abhorrence, was eaten with avidity by the old English epicure. Ancient cookery exhausted all its art in mixing sauces for this delectable morceau; and there was no entertainment of any magnificence till the sixteenth century, at which the porpesse, either bodily or in junks, did not find a respectable place.*

* Vide my "Antiquitates Culinariæ, or Curious Tracts relating to old English Cookery." Quarto; Blamire, 1791.

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There is another fish of a curious form and singular history, which is often fished up by the dredgers on the island shores. This is the *loligo*, or great cuttle-fish, whose bones are the well known white, oval substances, found on the beach in many parts of the island. This aquatic animal, which the naturalists place in the *vermes* class, exhibits a very hideous and deformed appearance. It is from eighteen inches to two feet in length, and covered with a thin dark colored skin. To the eye it seems to be of the consistence of jelly; strengthened, consolidated, and defended as it were by a bone on the upper part of the back. For the convenience of feeding itself, it possesses eight arms, placed with great regularity round its mouth, each of which is thickly set with a multitude of small concave discs, that enable it to adhere, with inconceivable tenacity, to rocks or stones when it chuses to be quiescent. Exclusive of these arms it has two *tentacula*, or feelers, of considerable length, which it is able to extend or contract at pleasure. With these it seizes upon the small fry that

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compose its food, which having entangled, they immediately commit the prey to the management of the eight arms, while themselves are again extended in search of further plunder. The eyes are seated immediately beneath the *tentacula*; and a little below them is discovered a curious mouth, which in shape and substance nearly resembles the beak of a parrot.

As this fish is formed without any external weapons of defence, and by no means made for contest or exertion, it would fare but ill amid the dangers of the deep, and the numerous enemies that surround it, had not providence wisely afforded it a means of safety, which enables it to escape mischance, and continue the propagation of its kind. This arises from a secretion of a black fluid, nearly resembling the best ink, contained in a bladder under the belly of the fish. No sooner does the animal perceive himself to be in danger, from the pursuit of an enemy which he can neither outswim nor contend with, than he emits (by the anus) a certain portion of his dingy liquor; this immediately discolours the cir-

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cumambient waters, and precludes the pursuer from seeing his destined prey, which, wrapped in impenetrable darkness, quietly sinks to the bottom, and there remains till the danger be overpast.

These remarkable means of self-preservation, did not elude the observation of the ancient naturalists, who all make mention of them; and particularly Oppian, in the following pretty manner:

“Th’endanger’d cuttle thus evades his fears,
And native hoards of fluid safety bears.
A pitchy ink peculiar glands supply,
Whose shades the sharpest beams of light defy:
Pursu’d he bids the fable fountains flow,
And wrapt in clouds eludes th’impending foe.
The fish retreats unseen, while self-born night,
With pious shade befriends her parent’s flight.”*

The *lance*, *ammodytes*, or *sand-cel*, is a delicate little fish, found on the sandy shores of the island. It being both a good bait for other species, and excellent eating in itself, the fishermen take some trouble in procuring them. At

* Jones’s Oppian’s Halieut. lib. III.

the recesses of the tide, they are to be found about fourteen inches below the surface, and are easily turned up by a light spade, or trident fork. The islanders call them the *sand-sprat*, from the place of their residence; into which they bore with great dexterity and dispatch.

Here also is found the *siliqua*, a species of the *solen*, or razor; so called from the exact resemblance of its shell to the haft of that instrument. I believe the islanders are unacquainted with the excellence of this fish; since I did not find they ever made a practice of taking them, although it is evident they are sufficiently plentiful, on the sandy parts of the coast, from the numbers of cast shells which occur, and the holes of their habitations visible at low water.

The slender form of this shell enables its inhabitant to sink it easily into the sand, which it does in a perpendicular direction, to the depth of nearly two feet. When the fish requires food, it ascends from this dark retreat, and discovers one end of the shell a few inches above the surface of the sand; from this the body is seen to

be protruded, and actively employed in the search of such minute insects as constitute its prey.

The *filiqua* is only to be caught at the recess of the tide; and so vigilant is it in providing for its own safety, that it requires great circumspection to surprize it even then. In this case, the fisherman takes some salt, and places a small quantity of it round the perforation in the sand wherein the fish resides. This quickly melting penetrates to the *filiqua*, who is led from thence to believe the tide is risen, and accordingly elevates himself to the surface to seek for food. A moment, however, convinces it of the deceit, and if the fisherman be not extremely active, his destined prey escapes him, by sinking instantaneously into its dark and deep retreat, from whence it is not a second time to be allured.

The *mytilus edulis*, or eatable muscle, is found in many parts of the island shores, but appears not to be regarded much, from the opinion of its possessing some noxious, nay poisonous qualities. The idea, however, is slanderous and
without

without foundation, as the fish itself is a wholesome and nutritious food. What occasions the disagreeable effects sometimes experienced after eating muscles, is swallowing inadvertently the little mass of hair or silky web, found in the middle of the fish, with which it attaches itself when alive to rocks and stones. This is very pernicious and highly indigestible, producing that sickness, swelling, &c. which raw silk, cobwebs, or any thing of the same nature, is found, if swallowed, to occasion.*

On opening the muscle, there is generally discovered a small crab, called the *pisum*, or pea-crab, who seems to be the voluntary inhabitant of this bivalve. The ancients fancifully imagined, that this minute insect was purposely placed in

* The singular conformation of the organs of this marine animal is said to be this: It has a mouth furnished with two fleshy lips; its intestine begins at the bottom of the mouth, passes through the brain, and makes a number of circumvolutions through the liver; on leaving this organ it goes on straight into the heart, which it penetrates, and ends in the anus; near which the lungs are placed, and through which it breathes!—Goldsmith's Animated Nature, vol. VII. p. 42.

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the shell of the muscle, and other fish of the same class, to assist, by its sagacity, the stupidity of its host, in acquiring food and avoiding danger. When the friendly pair feel inclined to eat, the muscle opens its shells, and permits the little lodger to travel forth in quest of provender. As soon as he has procured a supply, he returns to the sluggish muscle, enters the shell, and divides the plunder with him. But should he, on going out, perceive any of the *polypus* race, (the sworn enemies of the *mytilus* tribe,) in the neighbourhood, he instantly hurries to his testaceous home, communicates the alarm, and all danger is immediately prevented by the muscle firmly closing his impenetrable shells.*

All the submarine rocks and stones on the coast of the island afford protection to the *patella vulgata*, or common limpet; and to these this fish attaches itself with the most obstinate adhesion. The difficulty of separation indeed is such, that the fishermen are deterred from attempting to collect limpets for sale; though

* Pliny. Antiquitates Culin. in preliminary discourse.
such

such as have patience sufficient to disengage them from the places to which they are affixed, are rewarded for their trouble by an extremely good and nourishing viand.

Various species of turbinated shells, chiefly of the *buccinum* or *welk* kind, are picked up on these shores. As the natural inhabitants of these affect the deep recesses of the ocean, the shells are never found with their original possessors alive. It frequently happens, however, that on taking them up they appear to be tenanted by a kind of *crab*; the claws and legs of which discover themselves at the mouth or opening of the shell. This lodger is called the *bernard*, or *hermit-crab*, and curiously exhibits the wonderful operations of animal instinct. As the hinder parts of the hermit's body are tender and naked, unprotected by that shelly covering which its crustaceous brethren possess, perpetual injuries would happen to it, had not nature provided it with a foresight which serves to guard it from external accident. Taught by this, the hermit-crab seeks for the roomy cavity of some forsaken welk,

welk, into which it wriggles itself, and there continues till its increased size obliges it to look out for an habitation of greater dimensions. It then leaves its temporary protector, and traverses the coast with patient assiduity in search of another abode, to which when found it attaches itself, as to the former one, by means of a strong hook placed at the extremity of its tail. So kindly has providence bestowed even on the most minute and contemptible animals, the means of comfort and self-preservation!

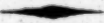
The Southern shore of the island abounds with crustaceous fish of all sorts. The *lobster* and *crab* in particular are found in great plenty, and of uncommon size and excellence. Of the former, I have seen an individual that weighed six pounds and an half; and I am informed the latter will arrive to an equal magnitude. The plentiful production of this fish on a particular part of the shore, at the back of the island, has occasioned a neighbouring village to be called Crab-Niton.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

OF THE ORNITHOLOGY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

“Quæ multæ glomerantur aves!”



THOUGH Nature have been rather thrifty in her distribution of *quadrupeds* to the Isle of Wight; yet she makes ample amends by the number and variety of the *feathered tribes*, which are either constant residents in this part of England, or flock hither during the season of incubation. At this period the lofty chalk cliffs are all one living scene, and exhibit a singular appearance of universal bustle.

Amongst the winged emigrants who thus visit the shores of the island, to fulfil the great command of nature, and rear their tender young,

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there are some which are seen only occasionally on these rocks; and who appear to be brought hither by accident or caprice, rather than the force of instinct. Thus for instance, the *eagle* has been known to incubate among the crags of Culver cliff. The beetling brows of this eminence appear to offer an eligible habitation for this predacious bird, which, according to Job's sublime description of it, is partial to these elevated situations :

“ Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high ?”

“ She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.”

“ From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off.”

“ Her young ones also suck up blood ; and where the slain are, there is she.”*

The last eagle known to build in Culver cliff (according to the information I could obtain,) came there in the year 1780. An adven-

* Job, chap. xxxix. ver. 27, 28, 29, 30. Pliny, speaking of the same birds, says ; “ Nidificant in petris et arboribus.”—Lib. X. sect. iv.

turous countryman, who had frequently descended the rock for the eggs of its other winged tenants, having watched the eagle from the nest, paid a visit to it also. He found this fabrication to be of considerable size, and formed of sticks and rushes laid alternately; containing one solitary young bird. This he took, but not knowing how to manage it, the eaglet soon died.

It is probable the parent bird had come from the Northern parts of Wales, or the craggy cliffs of the Western Isles; since the offspring appeared to be of the *ringtail* species, a sort very common in those places. It is, however, but very rarely that this noble bird builds its airy in a spot so distant from the natural place of its abode. The vigor of this race fits it for inhabiting the colder regions of the North. Here it dwells in solitary majesty, surrounded by silence and desolation; its fierceness and voracity giving additional horrors to the savage scenery of its unfrequented domain:

“ High from the summit of a craggy cliff
Hung o’er the deep, such as amazing frowns

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On

On utmost *Kilda's* shore, whose lonely race
Resign the setting sun to Indian worlds;
The royal eagle draws his vig'rous young,
Strong pounc'd, and ardent with paternal fire."

To an observer of the manners of birds, nothing is more amusing than to remark the various little devices which the parents will use, during the season of incubation, to draw any intruding footstep from the spot that conceals their offspring. Thus, for example, a pewit, or lapwing, the moment it is aware of any approach to her young, immediately takes flight, and wheeling in circles round the head of the enemy, endeavours to engage his attention, and by degrees to draw him from her nest. A partridge also, if she observe a dog or man coming towards her helpless covey, will hop away as if wounded, with a tumbling kind of gait, that the intruder may be induced to pursue her, rather than molest the offspring. But of all the different modes suggested by animal *instinct* for the preservation of the young, that of the eagle seems to be the most efficacious; and indeed forms an
admirable

admirable *accompaniment* to the rude and fearful scenery of the precipices wherein these birds usually fabricate their lofty citadels.

As no naturalist (to the best of my recollection) has mentioned this particular in the history of the eagle, the reader will not be displeased in being made acquainted with it by the following anecdote :

A few summers since, a gentleman, making the tour of Wales, passed through the county of Carnarvon. Having furnished himself with a guide, he visited every part of this romantic coast. One day, in strolling amongst the rocks and precipices with which it abounds, he found himself suddenly separated from his companion. At that moment, a dismal hollow moan assailed his ear from below. Shortly afterwards he heard it again : and it was repeated, with slight interruptions, for two or three minutes. His imagination, prepared to receive impressions of terror from the ruggedness and desolation of the surrounding rocks, immediately painted to him the unfortunate guide fallen from the precipice, and

and dashed to pieces on the crags beneath. In a short time, however, his mind was relieved from this painful idea, by the appearance of the supposed sufferer, who had been hidden from his observation by the prominent jutting of an enormous rock. On being joined by him, he communicated the extraordinary circumstance which had occurred, and the sounds of distress that even then rang in his ear. But his apprehensions were soon calmed by the guide, who informed him, they proceeded from some eagle in the vicinity ; with which bird it was customary, during the season of incubation and before the young ones had quitted the nest, to emit the doleful sounds that had alarmed him, in order to entice away any intruder from the place of its abode.

When the diversion of falconry was a noble, and even royal amusement, Culver cliffs were in some degree of repute, from their producing in great abundance a small species of *hawk*, of great strength and spirit, much used in sporting for partridges, and other birds of an equal or inferior size.

size. As this amusement is, however, now obsolete, the breed, which still continues, is allowed to build its aerial nests, and pursue its depredations on young game, pigeons, &c. without molestation. I take it to be the *falco nifus* of Linnaeus.

I have before mentioned the multitude of migrating birds, which may be seen on the rocky shores of the island, during the early summer months. Most of these come hither, merely for the purpose of depositing their eggs on the ledges of the cliffs, and rearing their young; which business being performed they return to their more northerly habitations. Of these species the most curious and remarkable are, the puffin; the razor-bill; the guillemot; and the cormorant, or, as it is vulgarly called in these parts, the *Isle of Wight parson*.

The *puffin* usually resorts to this coast about the latter end of April. On its arrival, it immediately looks out for a proper place for the deposition of its egg; it seldom, or never, laying more than one: a crevice in the rock, or a hole
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in the ground near the shore, best serves this important purpose. Being thus provided with an habitation, the female produces her burthen, which she and her faithful consort continue alternately to cover and protect, till the young bird is excluded from the shell. This happens about the middle of June, when nothing can equal the bustle and anxiety of the dams. They are now to be seen flying in circular rings about the aperture of their nests, shewing, as it were, the use of their pinions to the unpractised young, and encouraging them, by a thousand little arts, to commit themselves to the vacant air, or drop into the watery waste. This business, however, once finished, the *otogyn* ceases. Nature has accomplished the important end of introducing the rising generation properly to the world; and it would now be a waste of affection, were the dam to continue its parental fondness. The moment, therefore, that instinct informs the older birds it is time for them to depart from their summer habitation, they obey its intimations. No paternal ties can protract their stay; such of
their

their offspring as are able to accompany their flight, join the migrating host, whilst the more feeble young ones are left to shift for themselves.

I cannot give so accurate an idea of this singular bird, which is equally curious in person as in manners, as by transcribing the excellent description of it, drawn by the faithful pen of our British Zoologist.

“ This bird,” says he, “ weighs about twelve ounces ; its length is twelve inches ; the breadth from tip to tip of the wings extended, twenty-one inches : the bill is short, broad at the base, compressed on the sides, and running up to a ridge, triangular, and ending in a sharp point : the base of the upper mandible is strengthened with a white narrow prominent rim, full of very minute holes ; the bill is of two colors, the part next the head of a bluish grey, the lower part red : in the former is one transverse groove or furrow, in the latter three ; the size of the bill is one inch and three quarters long ; and the base of the upper mandible one inch broad.”

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“ The *irides* are grey, and the edges of the eye-lids of a fine crimson ; on the upper eyelid is a singular callous substance, grey, and of a triangular form ; on the lower is another of an oblong form ; the crown of the head, whole upper part of the body, tail, and covert feathers of the wings are black ; the quill-feathers are of a dusky hue.”

“ The cheeks are white, and so full of feathers as to make the head appear very large, and almost round ; the chin of the same color, bounded on each side by a broad bed of grey : from the corner of each eye is a small separation of the feathers, terminating at the back of the head. The neck is encircled with a broad collar of black ; but the whole lower part of the body, as far as is under water, is white.”

“ Tail black, composed of sixteen feathers : legs small, of an orange color, and placed so far behind as to disqualify it from standing, except quite erect ; resting not only on the foot, but the whole length of the leg ; this makes the rise of the puffin from the ground very difficult, and

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it meets with many falls before it gets on wing; but when that is effected, few birds fly longer or stronger."*

The *razor-bill* is found among the lofty crags of Freshwater, and St. Christopher's cliffs, about the beginning of May. Here it is that the female deposits her single egg (for they never lay but one at a time) on the bare level of some rocky ledge, that beetles over the beach below. This egg is enormously large in proportion to the size of the bird, being three inches in length; its color is either a dirty white, or a sea green, thickly set with a variety of irregular black spots.† To acquire these, and to procure the feathers of the young puffins, it is customary with many of the islanders to descend the tremendous precipices where they are found, by the assistance of a strong rope, attached to a crow bar fixed in the ground

* Brit. Zool. p. 431. Quarto.

† These are erroneously, though commonly, called puffin's eggs; whereas the egg of that bird is much smaller, and entirely white.

above. When the eggs are gotten, they may be purchased at about nine pence a dozen; and being boiled hard, are by many people much esteemed. The yolk is then rich and well flavored, but the white very insipid, and somewhat disagreeable to the eye, having the appearance of a dingy transparent jelly. If the situation of the egg be observed, as ordered by the parent bird, it will be found to be most wonderfully and curiously placed; with a balance so nice and exact, that should it be once removed, it is out of the power of human art to restore it to its former equilibrium. Indeed the danger of the egg rolling off the smooth level on which it is deposited, from the agitation of the winds, or other external causes, is so instinctively known by the female razor-bill, that when once it is brought forth, she seldom forsakes it till the young one is excluded; being regularly fed by the assiduous male, who is constantly on the wing seeking provision for his faithful partner, during this tedious incubation. In the mean time, should any plunderer deprive this patient creature

ture of her solitary egg, she immediately supplies its place with another; and if the theft be repeated twice or thrice, she will as often produce a fresh one; though, wonderful to tell, she never thinks of laying a second if her first-born be left undisturbed.

The razor-bill is a handsome bird, about eighteen inches long, and twenty-six broad; its head, back, and wings black; its neck and belly white. The bill is two inches long; somewhat crooked, strong, and sharp; having a broad transverse groove of white, crossing each mandible. The legs are black, and placed very far back, which gives the bird the same erect appearance when standing, as the puffin has; and nothing is more laughable, but at the same time more curious, than to behold long ranks of these birds thickly planted side by side, on the different ledges of the rocks, in a posture, which, though natural to them, has a most affected and absurd appearance.

The *guillemot* also migrates to the Isle of Wight rocks, to produce and rear its offspring.

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It generally accompanies the other aquatic birds before described, both in their advent and departure. Like them too, it only lays one egg, of a pale blue, spotted with black blotches, or marked with numerous intersecting lines. Its figure is not inelegant, though it do not boast the brilliant colors of other birds; being, on the head, neck, back, and wings, of a deep mouse color, with the belly perfectly white. The bill is about three inches long, straight, and tapering to a very sharp point.

Naturalists have given to this bird the opprobrious name of the *foolish guillemot*, from its not changing its situation when shot at. But I am inclined to think, from observations which I have personally made, that this conduct of the bird is rather a beautiful example of instinctive animal affection, than a specimen of stupidity. The attachment of these aquatic birds to their offspring, is (whilst it continues) ardent beyond apprehension; and the reason of the older birds thus neglecting to fly from danger, when it becomes too obvious to them to be mistaken, is,
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their disinclination to remove from their young ones, which would not be able to accompany them in their flight.

Whilst these various species of migrating birds continue in the neighbourhood of the Needle rocks, it is a common diversion with the sportsmen of these parts, to form parties for the purpose of shooting them; a barbarous practice, and without excuse; since the wounded carcases of these unsuspecting visitors can be applied to no one use after they are destroyed. But such are the delights of

“ The steady tyrant man,
Who, with the thoughtless insolence of pow’r
Inflam’d beyond the most infuriate wrath
Of the worst monster that e’er roam’d the waste,
For sport alone pursues the *cruel game*,
Amid the beamings of the gentle days.”

The *cormorant* * is not, properly speaking, a bird of migration. It builds in, and inhabits the

* The proper name of this bird is *corvorant*, from *corvus* crow, and *vorans* devouring; an appellation it well deserves, from its incredible voracity, insatiable gluttony, and rapid digestion.

immense

immense precipices of Freshwater, for the better part of the year. During the winter, however, the voracious plunderer may be seen, pursuing his depredations in the rivers and creeks, for many miles around. Here this solitary savage is on the perpetual watch for prey; tortured with unquenchable hunger, occasioned by an infinite multitude of worms, which inhabit his inside, and, like the dogs of Milton's Sin, would make his bowels their repast, did he not supply their voracity by unceasing repletion. For this purpose, the miserable glutton is seen continually diving after the fish, which his piercing eye can discern at a great depth in the water; or perched upon some solitary elevation, enjoying a temporary respite from labor, and the attacks of his internal enemies. During these moments of idleness and ease, he is often found seated in a lofty tree; a situation somewhat singular for a water fowl, and which indeed (according to the observation of Aristotle) the cormorant alone, of all birds of that class, makes use of. It is this generally unobserved circumstance, in the history of
of

of the cormorant, that our great Poet has laid hold of, when he introduces Satan usurping the figure of that bird, and perching upon a tree, to make his observations on our first parents :

“ Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
The middle tree, and highest there that grew,
Sat like a *cormorant*.”*

An admirable vehicle, from its voracity and baseness, for the Devil to make use of, whilst devising schemes of death and destruction.

Nature seems to have intended a check upon human gluttony, by rendering those quadrupeds and birds, which are most remarkable for an intemperate indulgence of the appetite, the most hateful and offensive. The cormorant is a proof of this, than which bird no other is more voracious in feeding, nor at the same time, more disagreeable in person, detestable in smell, or disgusting in manners ; an instance, amongst num-

* Paradise Lost, book IV. line 193.

berless others, of the *moral instruction* which might be gleaned from every part of nature, if we would but peruse her ample volume.

The island has always produced abundance of game. As early as the reign of Henry VIII. we find that the pheasants and partridges of the royal demesnes here, engaged the attention of our monarchs. This prince, who was a great sportsman, and more particularly devoted to *hawking*, amused himself occasionally that way in the island. Great depredations, however, were committed by the farmers, and lower ranks of people, on the birds, (for *poaching* was practised even three centuries ago) which occasioned the following mandate from Henry, to Richard Worsley, Esq. who was then Captain of the Isle of Wight. It bears date in 1541 :

“ Trusty and well beloved we grete you well and being crediblye enfourmed that or. Games of Partriche and Fesant wthin that our Isle of Wight is muche decayed by the pmissi^on and sufferance of suche lewd p^{er}sons as for their pryvate Lucres
contrary

contrary to our Lawes and pleasure doo dailye wt. netts and other Engyns take the same. You shall understande that myndyng to havie the sayd Games of Patriches and Fesant cherished wtⁿ our sayde Isle as wel for our disporte and Pastyme if we should chaunce to repayre thither as for our Furniture at sundry our Honors. Manors and Houses which from tyme to tyme we intende to replenishe with the score of the same Isle as nede shall requyre Our pleasure and commaundement is that you shall not only uppon monicon to be by you hereof given to the Inhabitaunts of the sayde Isle have diligent regarde and vigilant Eye that no man of no degree or condition kill any Fezant or Partriche wt. net Engyne or Hawk on any our propre lands in the same Isle, taking the Netts and Engyns of all such as shall attempte the contrary and further punisheng the ptyes soe offending as to your Wisdom shall be thought convenyent. But also that you shall advise all the Rest of the Owners and Inhabitaunts there at o^r. con-

templacon also to spare the same games in their own grounds, speally abstaining to take or suffre to be taken any Fesant or Partriche wt. netts and such Engyns as totally destroyeth the Brede of the same wherein you shall doo unto us acceptable service. And theise our Lres shall be your sufficient Warraunt and discharge in that behalf. Given undre our Signet, at or. manor of Otland the 19th. day of Decembre the 32 yere of or. Reign."*

The *woodcock* is found in the Isle of Wight during the usual season of his visits to this part of Europe. Two or three stragglers generally arrive before the appearance of the great flock, which always manages to reach the land after sunset; a well-informed friend, who is also a sportsman, informed me, that one or two had been seen this year as early as the middle of September, but instances of this premature

* Append. to Worsley's Hist. Isle of Wight, No. XXXVII.

advent are by no means common. They continue here till the latter end of March, after which time it seldom happens that they are met with. One or two pair, indeed, have been known to remain and breed, as has been the case, though rarely, in some other parts of the kingdom.

Many stories have been told of *swallows*, and other British *hirundines*, being found during the winter, in a torpid state, in holes and crevices of the island cliffs; but, after the minutest enquiry, I do not see reason to credit any of the relations. Indeed, the general migration of the *hirundo* tribes is now so fully established, that the naturalist will be disinclined to give credit to any thing less than ocular demonstration, for their continuance during the winter with us. In forward springs they have been observed here as early as the eighteenth and twentieth of February: and at the latter end of September may be seen assembled in large flocks, waiting for a fair gale, to waft them to Southern latitudes,

and

and warmer climes. Indeed they need every assistance from wind and weather, since we find they wing their arduous flight as far as Senegal, and other parts of Africa.*

* M. Adanson's Voyage to Senegal, p. 121. The *Poet of Nature* has, with his usual accuracy, painted the manners of these tribes, previous to their departure from their summer abodes :

“ When autumn scatters his departing glooms,
Warn'd of approaching winter, gather'd play
The swallow people, and toss'd wide around
O'er the calm sky, in convulsion swift,
The feathered eddy floats, rejoicing once,
Ere to their winter slumbers they retire.
In clusters hung beneath the mould'ring bank,
And where, unpierc'd by frosts, the wint'ry cavern
sweats ;
Or rather into warmer climes convey'd,
With other kindred birds of season there,
They twitter chearful, till the vernal months
Invite them welcome back ; for thronging now,
Innum'rous wings are in commotion all.”—Thompson.

CHAP. V.

OF THE BOTANY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

IT is not our intention to enter into a minute and scientific account of the various plants to be found in this extensive district ; since this alone would make a copious work. The object of these pages is merely to point out a few species, remarkable either for their rarity, the singularity of their conformation, or their efficacy in medicine. The mere systematic classification of herbs and flowers, without a view to their utility, seems to be but a trifling pursuit, an useless waste of time and patience ; but when the botanist, by pointing out their various virtues and powers, or their curious and wise construction, can extend the knowledge of simples,

or

or elevate the mind to contemplation, his labors are then dignified by their laudable and eligible ends.

The *ophrys apifera*, or *bee orchis*, is found in the fields about Carisbrooke castle. It flowers in June and July, and then displays a singular and beautiful contrivance of nature for the preservation of the plant. The great importance of the nectary or honey-gland in flowers is manifest; and surprizing care and various devices are found to have been used, in protecting this part from the depredations of those various insects, which are ever on the wing in search of this delicious vegetable liquid. To this end the nectarium of the *bee orchis* is formed with so near a resemblance to the wall bee, as at a small distance to be easily mistaken for that insect; by which appearance, it is probable, a number of depredators, who would otherwise rob the plant of its means of support, are deterred from approaching it.

The *digitalis*, or *fox-glove*, is a most beautiful and showy wild plant, occurring in almost every hedge-bank

hedge-bank in the island. It is indeed common to most parts of Southern England, and therefore not mentioned here on account of its rarity, but because it teems with efficacious virtues, which are by no means generally understood. The misfortune is, that in the vegetable world, as in every thing else, we are apt to overlook and despise those productions which are most common, not troubling ourselves with an investigation of their several properties; whereas it is not improbable, (reasoning from the kindness of nature in other respects) that those which most perpetually occur, are most replete with medicinal uses, would we be at the trouble of searching them out;

“ But yet the wholesome herb neglected dies,
Though with the pure exhilarating soul
Of nutriment and health, and vital pow’rs,
Beyond the reach of art ’tis copious blefs’d.”

The salutary effects of the digitalis are experienced in one of the severest maladies that can afflict the human frame; the *anasarca*, a kind of dropsy, attended with an enlargement of the

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legs

legs and thighs, and a difficulty of respiration. In this disorder, the following decoction is found to be extremely efficacious, and in a very short time; one large spoonful, or half an ounce, being taken twice during the day.

Boil four ounces of the fresh leaves of purple fox-glove, from two pints of water to twelve ounces; and add to the strained liquor, while yet warm, three ounces of rectified spirit of wine.

The preparation of it is easy, the mode of administering simple, and the good effects nearly certain.* There can be no difficulty in distinguishing this elegant plant from its more homely neighbours; the length of the stem, thickly set with inverted corollas, of a purple hue, and a bell shape, forming a beautiful cone of flowers, sufficiently points it out.†

On

* Vide a pamphlet, entitled, "Experiments on Mucilaginous and Purulent Matter," by Dr. Darwin. Cadell, 1780.

† This plant may be further ascertained by the following character. The leaves of the calyx are ovate (egg-shaped) and acute, with the segments of the corolla obtuse

On the Eastern shores of the island is found the *conferva polymorpha*, which receives its name from the singular changes it undergoes in form and appearance. Originally it is of a red hue; this it first discards for brown, and shortly afterwards becomes black; dropping, at the same time, its lower leaves, and lengthening some of its upper ones, to the almost total alteration of its pristine figure.

The *lichen calcareum*, or liver-wort, occurs on all the rocky elevations. This plant seems to be the foundation of all vegetation, drawing its own nourishment probably from air alone, originally. It is the first vegetable that appears on the broad front of the naked rock, which it runs over with a kind of net-work. When it dies away, its recrements afford a bed for other mosses to root themselves in, which in their turn perish, and leave an additional soil for succeeding plants;

obtuse, and the upper lip entire: the inside of the corolla is beautifully sprinkled with spots resembling eyes; and the leaves are large and wrinkled. The color of the flower is red. Rousseau's Letters on Botany; Martyn's edit. 1794; p. 316.

Kk 2

thus

thus probably has the globe gradually acquired the means of supporting vegetables, and assumed that foil with which it is covered, from the naked appearance it exhibited after the ravages of an universal deluge.

Among the ledges and precipices of the cliffs is found the *crithmum maritimum*, or rock-samphire ; which is gathered for sale by the adventurous hinds of the island. Well might Shakspeare pronounce this avocation to be a *dreadful trade* ; * for it is a fearful sight even to see the business performed, much more terrible then must the actual execution of it be. The mode is the same with that practised, and before hinted at, in acquiring the puffin eggs ; a rope attached to a crow bar firmly fixed on the brow of the cliff, by which the person lowers himself down to the crevices wherein the samphire is found ; and by the same means clambers again to the summit, when he has filled the basket girt around him. There is, however, some little fraud practised now and then by these samphire

* In his King Lear.

dealers,

dealers, and the purchaser (unless he be a botanist and can discover the deceit) is furnished with a bastard kind of plant, by no means so fit for medicinal or culinary purposes as the genuine samphire. This substituted vegetable is called the *inula crithmoides*, or golden samphire, and gathered, with little trouble and no danger, on all the sea beaches in and near the island. The fallacy may be detected by observing the formation of the plant, and tasting the stalk or leaf. In the genuine samphire, the stalks are succulent, the leaves pinnate (winged, or feathered) formed of three or five divisions, each having as many small, thick, lance-shaped leaves. Both these and the stalk have a pungent taste. In the other species, the stalk, on the contrary, is roundish, jointed, and tasteless; with a tough string running through the middle of it, instead of the flat leaf of the *crithmum maritimum*.*

The submarine rocks and stones which line the coasts of the island, abound with various aquatic plants; such as

* Rousseau's Letters on the Elements of Botany; translated by Professor Martyn; edit. 1794; p. 233.

The

The *fucus fibrosus*, or fennel-leaved wrack or sea-weed ;

The *fucus bifidus*, or bifid ditto ;

The *fucus canaliculatus*, or furrowed ditto ;

The *fucus crispatus*, or branched ditto ;

The *fucus albidus*, or white ditto—a very beautiful species ;

The *fucus multifidus*, or multifid ditto :

The *ulva purpurescens*, or purple laver ;

The *ulva capillaris*, or capillary ditto ;

The *ulva filiformis*, or filiform ditto—

most of them constructed for riding on the waves, by the assistance of numberless little bladders filled with air, which support them on the surface, and thus enable them to form vast beds of floating vegetation.

The mildness of the climate in this part of England, is manifested by the great numbers of the *myrtus communis*, or common myrtle, to be seen here in all its varieties. It needs no particular culture or attention, but braves the variations of the external air, and all the rigors of the winter ; circumstances which would have afforded

forded sufficient hints for ancient mythologists to have ascribed the tutelage of the island to the gentle goddess of love;

“*Populus Alcidæ gratissima, vitis Iaccho,
Formosæ myrtus Veneri, tua laurea Phœbo.*”*

* Virg. Eclog. The myrtle flourishes best in a warm marine situation—

“*Pallentesque ederas, et amantes littora myrtus.*—Virg. Georg. I. verse 28.

CHAP. VI.

OF THE FOSSIOLOGY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

THE island consists chiefly of an immense mass of calcareous matter, of a chalky nature, running in a direction East and West. Of this all the higher parts are composed; the other flat and less animated spots exhibit a gravelly, sandy, or clayey soil.

This chalk, however, is not of so soft and fine a texture as that found more to the Eastward, by Portsmouth, and along the Suffex downs; approaching nearer to limestone. It is, notwithstanding, dug both for medicinal and agricultural purposes, and used as a manure throughout the whole island.

In

In the pits which have been thus formed, are frequently found chalk-fossils of different sorts, such as *sechini*, *sharks' teeth*, and *ammonia*, that have preserved their form, enveloped in the calcareous matter wherein they were bedded, throughout all the unknown and wonderful mutations it has in the lapse of ages experienced.*

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* A modern philosopher thus accounts for the formation of *chalk*. "The limestone rocks have had their origin from shells formed beneath the sea, the softer strata gradually dissolving, and filling up the interstices of the harder ones; afterwards, when these accumulations of shells were elevated above the waters, the upper strata became dissolved by the action of the air and dews, and filled up the interstices beneath, producing solid rocks, of different kinds, from the coarse limestones to the finest marbles. When these limestones have been in such a situation that they could form perfect crystals, they are called *spars*, some of which possess a double refraction, as observed by Sir Isaac Newton. When these crystals are jumbled together, or mixed with some coloring impurities, it is termed *marble*, if its texture be equable and firm; if its texture be coarse and porous, yet hard, it is called *limestone*; if its texture be very loose and porous, it is termed *chalk*."—Darwin's Bot. Garden, First Part, additional notes.

With respect to *fossil shells*, it is a very curious circumstance, that many of them are not now known to our naturalists

The range of cliffs which form the bold Southern shore of the island exhibit also a great variety of beautiful *fossil shells*; amongst which are seen vast and perfect *echini*; *cornua ammonis*, of all sizes, from six inches to eighteen in diameter; *cavus*; *turbinated* and *bivalved* shells of various species, either now altogether unknown in a living state, or inhabitants only of the tropical climates. They are sometimes found bedded in limestone rock; and, in other spots, enveloped in a dark-colored, indurated clay, which is soluble by water.

naturalists in their recent state; and that, on the other hand, the shells most numerous in their recent state, are not known in a fossil one. The *cornu ammonis*, for instance, of which such numbers are every where discovered in the fossil state, has never been discovered in a recent one. "Were all the *ammonia* destroyed," says Dr. Darwin, "when the continents were raised? Or do some genera of animals perish, by the increasing power of their enemies? Or do they still reside at inaccessible depths in the sea? Or do some animals change their forms gradually, and become new genera?" Philosophy may ask these questions, but it is to be feared the narrow bounds of human knowledge will never enable us to give satisfactory answers to them.

A thick

A thick and extensive stratum of a close, black, earthy stone, or *schistus*, runs under the whole island. It appears at low water mark on the coast near Mottistun. When first taken up it can be penetrated by any sharp or pointed instrument; but after having been sometime exposed to the air, it indurates, and makes very good whetstones. The inhabitants call it *plotmore*.

A stratum of *coal* discovers itself at the foot of Bimbridge cliff, and runs through the Southern part of the island, appearing again at Warden ledge, in Freshwater parish. On the North side of this stratum, lie a vein of white sand and another of fuller's earth; and on the South side is a vein of red ochre. The coal is said to be of a good quality. The late Sir Robert Worsley sunk a shaft at Bimbridge, in order to ascertain the depth of the stratum; but finding it was very thin, he did not conceive the profits of working it would answer the charges of the undertaking, and therefore desisted.*

* Sir Richard Worsley's Hist. p. 7.

Various sorts of *stone* are found in the Isle of Wight, but none of very superior quality. That which was formerly dug near Quarr Abbey, (so named from its neighbourhood to these quarries) appears to have been for several centuries in some estimation; the cathedral at Winchester and other ecclesiastical edifices being built with it. When the Portland freestone, however, once became known, its qualities were found to be so much more valuable than those of the Quarr stone, that the latter sunk into disrepute, soon ceased to be called for, and is now forgotten. There are several varieties of stone also, at the back of the island, but being all of a sandy nature, coarse grain, and dark color, they are not in much request.

The *argilla apyra*, a heavy, ductile, white clay, commonly called *tobacco-pipe clay*, is found in the island; there are several considerable strata of it, which are made to turn to good account.

Amongst the fossil earths of this district, may be reckoned the *argilla fullonica* (fuller's earth);
the

the *argilla marga*, or white marle; the *marga columbina*, or dove marle; the *ochra ferri*, or yellow ochre; and the *ochra Syriaca*, or red ochre: the two last are particularly obvious in Alum bay, where their mingled strata form a beautiful and variegated appearance at a small distance. At the same spot is also found the *arena micacea argentea*, or white silvery sand, of infinite use in the glass and porcelain manufactories, for which it is perpetually shipping off. The bed of it is, however, so immense, that scarcely any diminution in the quantity can be perceived.

The name of this bay sufficiently points out the kind of fossil salt produced there. The *alumen commune*, common native alum, is found in considerable quantities. As it is a salt of great efficacy and use both in medicine, dying, &c. the crown used formerly to monopolize the whole of it; and proper people were appointed to gather and preserve it for government. This practice commenced with Queen Elizabeth, who having learnt

learnt that much of this natural production was to be gotten in the island, sent the following mandate to the then governor, Mr. Richard Worsley, in order to ascertain the truth of what she had heard, and to avail herself of it, if it were so.

“After my right hartly commendacons—Whereas the Quean’s Majesty being infermyd that there is wt̄in that Ile certen Oure of Alume. For trial and Profe whereof her Highness purtly sendeth thider the Bearer herof one Bendall, These shall be in her Mat’s. Name to require you with your Authorite and favr. so to assist him in that behalf, as he may revyse fyche partes there as he shall thynk to be meete for the purpose and bring wt̄. him sume part of the sayde Oure to the End he maye therof make sume profe here wt̄in the Realme. In this part as her Highness trusteth, you will give order that no man there shall impede and resist him; foe he hath charge to use himself with fyche moderation and respect of behavior as shall apperteyne.

And

And thus I bid you hartely well to fare. Fro
the Court at Westmynster the 7th. daye of
Marche 1561; your assured

Freind,

W. Cecil." *

Small masses of the *fulphur vivum opacum*, or
yellow native fulphur, are picked up on several
parts of the island shores; and such quantities of
copperas about Shanklin, as are sufficient to freight
small trading vessels, which carry the same to the
London markets, and there dispose of it to great
advantage.

The expectations of the islanders were some
years since awakened, on a discovery that small
particles of *gold* were mingled with the sand of
Chale bay. The circumstance was soon noised
about, and the whole neighbourhood, filled with
the thoughts of ideal fortunes, left their occu-
pations, and bent their attention to the collecting
and sifting of this precious sand. After a short
time, however, the gold dust ceased to appear,

* Sir Richard Worsley's Hist. Append. No. II.

and

and it was found out, that a Spanish ship having been wrecked on the coast, this rich article, which had been supposed to be the natural production of the place, was part of her cargo, washed ashore by the violence of a ground sea. The islanders therefore returned to their homes and usual avocations, somewhat disappointed, but wisely determining to content themselves for the future with the slow but certain profits of agriculture, and mercantile pursuits. *

* “*Argentum et aurum,*” says the incomparable Tacitus, speaking of the natural productions which their country yielded to the Germans, “*propitii an irati dii negaverint, dubito.*” Could our philosopher have beheld the evils which the possession of these fatal metals occasioned to the innocent inhabitants of the *new world*; or have taken a view of the barbarism, ferocity, and wretchedness which are exhibited on the gold coast, from one extremity to another, he would have entertained no doubt on the subject; but instantly acknowledged the kindness and benevolence of the gods, in denying these “*shining mischiefs*” to the honest Germans.

A
GENERAL VIEW
OF THE
AGRICULTURE
OF THE
ISLE OF WIGHT.

“Χρηζών πλῆτε, μελετῆν ἔχε πῖον. ἀγρη.”*

“Ye gen’rous Britons! venerate the plough,
And o’er your hills, and long withdrawing vales,
Let autumn spread his treasures to the sun,
Luxuriant and unbounded.”

CHAP. I.

A SKETCH OF THE PROGRESS OF AGRICULTURE
IN BRITAIN, FROM THE EARLIEST
TO THE PRESENT TIMES.

AGRICULTURE is one of the necessary arts of life; perhaps the most so of any other. At least it must be the first step towards comfort and civilization. Whilst men continue to lead

* “If ardent thirst of wealth thy bosom warm,
Leave vain pursuits, and take a fertile farm.”—Phocyl. Sent.

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a wandering, unsettled life, without fixed habitations, they will of course remain savage and unenlightened; nor can any scintillation of improvement be expected to appear in their minds and manners, till the knowledge and practice of agriculture have given them ideas of the advantages resulting from the possession of permanent property, and taught them to be stationary, and to settle and associate together.

That the first Celtic inhabitants of this kingdom were not arrived to the knowledge of agriculture, when they wandered hither, has been suggested before; they were in that stage of human manners denominated the *hunter state*, migrating from place to place, without any notions of permanent property or settled abode.

Their Belgic successors, in the South of Britain, had advanced a step beyond these barbarians, and possessed some little theoretic and practical knowledge of husbandry; though so crude and perverse were their ideas on the subject, that they esteemed the pursuit of this useful art ignoble and impolitic; and actually framed institutions to discourage it.

Cæsar

Cæsar tells us, the diet of these people consisted chiefly of milk, flesh and cheese: that none of them possessed any spot of ground which they could call their own: that the chiefs allotted annually a certain proportion of land to each person, which, at the conclusion of the year, was again resumed, and the temporary owner obliged to repair to another spot; a conduct they adopted for the express purpose, as he further informs us, of weaning the people from agricultural pursuits.*

It was under the government of the Romans, that Britain first exhibited a systematic and respectable husbandry; these conquerors shewed a minute and studious attention to every branch of this art. In their hands it became a perfect science; a subject of eulogy to their orators,†

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of

* De Bell. Gal. lib. VI. cap. xxii. Tacitus gives an account nearly similar. De Moribus Germ. cap. xxvi.

† "Omnium rerum ex quibus aliquid adquiretur, nihil est *agriculturâ* melius, nihil uberius, nihil dulcius, nihil homine libero dignius."—Cicero de Officiis, I. cap. xlii.—and again; "Ab aratro arcescebantur qui consules fierent

of discussion to the literati,* and of description to their poets :

“ Such things as these the rural Maro sung
To wide imperial Rome, in the full height
Of elegance and taste by Greece refin’d.”

Most of the modes of tillage which are even now in use with us, were introduced amongst the natives of Britain by their Roman conquerors; to whom we are indebted also for many of the seeds, plants, roots, and flowers, which administer to our present comfort, luxury, and amusement.†

At

fierent. *Suos enim agros studiosè colebant, non alienos cupidè appetebant, quibus rebus et agris, et urbibus, et nationibus rempublicam, atque hoc imperium et populi Romani nomen auxerunt.*—Orat. pro Ligaro.

* Varro ; Cato ; Columella ; Pliny.

† We are to thank the Romans for the following seeds, plants, and roots. The radix, or radish ; the asparagus ; the cucumber ; the lettuce ; the melon ; the pea ; the faba, or bean ; the beet root ; the fennel ; rosemary ; and thyme. They also added to the parterre the following flowers—the rhos, or rose ; the lilly ; the violet : and to the orchard the following fruits—the pear ; the damson ; the cherry ; the persica, or peach ; the aprica, or apricot ;
the

At the time of the Norman conquest, the agriculture of Britain appears to have been at a very low ebb. But a small proportion of land was in tillage; and the chief attention was bent to the grazing of cattle, and the fattening of hogs.* Little encouragement, indeed, could be given to it in the pure feudal ages; the lord of the demesne was too much occupied in constant warfare, to attend to domestic concerns; and his miserable vassal, with every intellectual faculty chilled and depressed by ignorance, superstition, and servitude, had neither ability, spirits, nor inclination, to try experiment, or attempt improvement.

A small approach to the increase of tillage was made at the close of the twelfth century, when

the cidonia, or quince; the morus, or mulberry; the castanea, or chestnut; the ficus, or fig; the vitis, or vine; the sorbus, or service; the mespilus, or medlar. They introduced cider and perry: and lastly, enlarged the *British fauna* by bringing with them, pheasants; pigeons; partridges; pluvialis, or plover; turtur, or turtle dove; pavo, or pea-cock; rabbit; coccyx, or cuckoo. Pliny.

* Vide Domesday Book, passim.

the barons manumitted a number of their vassals, in order to strengthen their cause against the kingly power. These freedmen receiving at the same time a certain proportion of allodial land, began inclosing their acquisitions; and soon experiencing the sweets of eating the fruits of their own labor, introduced some small taste for the pursuits of husbandry.

But the inauspicious influence of the feudal institutions, and the monopolizing spirit of the church, that swallowed up nearly a third part of the landed property of the kingdom, still operated as constant checks upon any little spirit of agricultural improvement, which might otherwise have gotten abroad; and it was not till the reign of Henry VII. (whose policy dictated a relaxation and diminution of the feudal tenures) when landed property was to be acquired by most descriptions of people, that any general attention was paid to this art. This event, however, being followed, in the subsequent reign, by a distribution of the immense possessions of the ecclesiastics amongst the laity, the united circumstances

stances diffused a pretty universal spirit of husbandry, and lucrative improvement; a spirit, indeed, that operated rather too violently. For the new possessors of these lands, wishing to turn their recently-acquired property to the speediest advantage, began, with all expedition, breaking up the numerous commons and waste grounds, which had hitherto afforded subsistence to the *peasantry* of the kingdom. The legislature perceiving that this system was practised universally with increasing ardor, thought proper at length to prohibit it, as it had a manifest tendency to impoverish and destroy that useful description of people.

Since the period of the Reformation, when the vast advantages of agriculture first became generally known and acknowledged, this useful art has been creeping on by a slow, but progressive improvement, till the present time. During this interval of two centuries and an half, several names, high on the roll of literary fame, have, at different times, honored agriculture with their patronage and recommendation;

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dation; nor did Bacon, Milton, Evelyn, or Cowley think it unworthy of their occasional lucubrations. But it was left for the present age to call in the influence of *government*, to the promotion, encouragement, assistance, and improvement of the national husbandry; a great and wise idea, originally suggested by a patriot, whose assiduous labors in the developement of the true sources of national happiness and wealth, entitle him to the esteem and gratitude of every real lover of his country.*

* Sir John Sinclair, Bart. President of the Board of Agriculture.

CHAP. II.

OF THE DIFFERENT GRAINS SOWN ; USUAL
COURSE OF CROPS; VARIOUS MANURES, &c.

THE soil of the Isle of Wight being extremely diversified, as we have seen in a former part of this volume, the modes of tillage, kinds of grains, courses of crops, and sorts of manure, will of course be different in its different districts. We will, however, point out, as nearly as possible, the husbandry of each particular part.

The grains chiefly cultivated here are, wheat, barley, oats, pease, and beans.

Of wheat, all the different sorts are occasionally used. In the neighbourhood of the sea, the farmers prefer the *old white-strawed wheat*, for the sensible reason of its being less liable than any other kind to be injured by high winds and

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tempestuous weather. On the North* part of the island, the red strawed wheat is usually sown; as well as in all the wet, poor lands, because it is supposed to *run more to straw* than any other kind, and of course enables the farmer to provide more fodder for his cattle in the winter.

Of oats, the common sorts are generally sown; though some farmers, particularly in the Eastern parts of the island, are partial to the *Tartarian* kind; but I am informed they seldom answer.

With respect to beans and pease, more or less attention is paid to them, according to the nature and soil of the land.

The following is a statement of the rotation of crops, in various parts of the island.

Towards the Eastern extremity, the common course, on the free, light-working land, is,

* By the North of the island is to be understood *all the lands* on the North of the range of hills which intersect the island from East to West; and by the South of the island is to be understood all the lands lying between the said hills and the ocean.

Third year, - - Clover;

Fourth ditto, - - Wheat.

Towards the Western extremity there is this variation in the management of their crops :

First year, - - Turnips ;

Second ditto, - Barley ;

Third ditto, - - Clover, and ray-grass ;

Fourth ditto, - - Wheat.

The wheat is prepared for sowing, sometimes by steeping it in salt water, and afterwards mixing it with lime ; but generally by simply mixing with it lime, which has been scalded with boiled fresh water.

The medium produce of wheat on the best land in the Southern part of the island is about twenty-four bushels per acre ; and on the North side of the island the average may be laid at eighteen bushels per acre ; so that the medium produce *throughout the whole district* appears to be twenty-one bushels per acre.

The medium produce of oats is twenty-five bushels per acre in the Eastern part of the island, and about five and thirty in the Southern and
Western

Western parts. Of barley thirty bushels on the same spots.

The leguminous crops are generally pretty productive; pease and beans yielding twenty-four bushels per acre in the Eastern parts; and in the Southern and Western parts, the former giving twenty-eight bushels, and the latter thirty-two bushels, per acre.

In preparing their land for wheat, the islanders give three or four ploughings (as the soil requires) to their fallows; and one on breaking up their clover lays. They sow about two bushels and an half per acre. For oats they seldom plough more than once, and sow about four bushels and an half per acre. For barley they give three ploughings, and sow about four bushels per acre.

The grain is in general broad-cast, though some farmers have adopted the drilling system for wheat, barley, and pease, which is found to succeed very well in the free, light, sandy soils. When this husbandry is practised, they use a small kind of horse-hoes, which are worked by
a man;

a man; these, with the assistance of hand-hoes, and earthing up the ranks, and keeping them clean by women and children weeders, combine to produce profitable crops.

The system of *fallows*, both summer and winter, is pretty generally followed throughout the island; nor will many of the farmers hear of a contrary practice. Much, indeed, has been written and said on both sides of this agitated question; and the favorers of the different modes are equally pertinacious in support of their respective doctrines. It would be difficult therefore to say which is right *in all points*; but modern philosophy has proved that the fallowist is *wrong in one*. The great argument of the friend to fallows, for leaving his land in a state of idleness during the winter, has been the supposed benefit it received from the

“Ethereal nitre—

whate’er the wintry frost

Nitrous prepar’d.”

It is now, however, well known, that neither ice nor snow contain any *nitrous* particles, nor in
any

any degree *meliorate* the ground ; for, according to the observation of an excellent natural philosopher, though frost, by enlarging the bulk of moist clay, leaves it softer for a time after the thaw, yet as soon as the water exhales, the clay becomes as hard as before, being pressed together by the incumbent atmosphere, and by its self-attraction.* Hence, therefore, one of the strongest reasons for pursuing this system vanishes into air.

In many of their stiff clayey lands, the islanders dibble beans ; but some improvement might be introduced into this branch of husbandry. By planting ten pecks upon an acre, (a common practice), a very useless waste of seed is occasioned ; and in not hoeing them when they come up, which in general they omit doing, the plant is less healthy and productive than it would be if properly attended to.

Potatoes are not so much regarded in the Isle of Wight as their excellence and utility deserve. The little farmers, and laboring poor, are almost

* Dr. Darwin.

the only people who plant them: the land intended to receive them is fallowed and well dunged, the potatoes (divided according to their eyes) are then planted in rows; the rows being about a foot distance from each other; and earthed up when about four or five inches above the ground. In general the crops are very satisfactory; from sixty to eighty sacks per acre.

I confess, I am astonished that more attention is not paid to the potatoe, in this part of Hampshire, where so many spots are found, peculiarly well calculated for its cultivation. Of all the roots which our climate produces, none perhaps is of greater, or more general use than this; whether it be considered as a meliorator, cleanser, and improver of the soil, or as a plant which affords a cheap and nutritious food, both to men and to cattle. Viewed in the light of profit also, it would assuredly answer well to the Isle of Wight farmer to cultivate potatoes, as his vicinity to Portsmouth, whither they might be carried at a trifling expence, would always insure

insure him an immediate and profitable market for his crop.

I am conscious, that with many farmers this plant is no great favorite; nor is a crop of potatoes considered by them as an *improving* one. So far from it, indeed, that in some counties, about Crewkerne in Somersetshire, for instance, as a very intelligent gentleman has informed me, the landlords restrict their tenants by special covenants, from planting more than a very small quantity of land with potatoes, under the idea of their being very *impoverishing* roots. However, in this, as well as in most other matters in agriculture, much must depend on the nature of the soil, the management and preparation of the land, and the different sorts and quantities of manure, &c. made use of in different parts.

The times of sowing and harvesting are as follow. Wheat and winter vetches are generally sown in October, and harvested in August; oats are sown in March; barley, in April; beans, in February; and pease, in February or

Oo

March.

March.* Pease are harvested in the latter part of July, or beginning of August, and the other grains in September.

Their manures are chiefly chalk and dung arising from the farm-yard, which, after lying for some time in a heap, is mixed with earth. From fifteen to twenty pots per acre, of this compost, are spread on the lands prepared for wheat. Chalk is also much used, its durable and improving qualities having been of late years experienced by the Isle of Wight farmers. They put about one hundred bushels of it upon an acre, which continue to operate beneficially for fourteen or fifteen years. Some few experimental farmers have of late tried the effects of *sea-weeds* as a manure; and mixing them up with dung, lime, and earth, formed a compost, and spread it on the soil: but I am informed their pains have not been, in many instances, rewarded with success.

* Some farmers sow their pease as early as January, and these are generally found to produce the best crops.

In the island the farmers have a choice of marles, both stone and testaceous: when they find it necessary to use this manure, they usually put from twenty to twenty-four waggon-loads upon an acre.

The farms are of a moderate size, some few under £100 per annum, and some above £400 per annum; but the general run is between those two sums.

Early in Henry the Seventh's reign, a regulation was made for reducing the size of the farms in the Isle of Wight, and preventing the landed property getting into the hands of a few individuals, to the decrease of population, and the destruction of the peasantry. An act of parliament was passed, prohibiting any of the inhabitants from holding farms, lands, or tithes, exceeding the annual rent of *ten marks*; an absurd law, which could not long operate with any efficacy, inasmuch as money was constantly decreasing in value, and land taking a contrary direction; the consequence of which would be that the size of the farms must have been con-

stantly diminished, to keep them within the letter of the act.

The average *rent* of land on the South side of the island, including foul ground, does not exceed fifteen shillings per acre; and on the North side the medium is about eleven shillings per acre. Estates, when sold, fetch about twenty-eight years purchase.

CHAP. III.

TURNIPS; GRASSES; PASTURE; DRAINING;
AND ROADS.

TURNIPS are now highly esteemed in the Southern, Western, and central parts of the island; and the farmers are correcting an error, which some few years since they were guilty of, viz. not hoeing this valuable root. They now plough four times, harrow and hoe once, and feed them off with sheep by hurdling.

The green crops mostly cultivated are, turnips, clover, vetches, ray-grass, and trefoil. They have also some buck-wheat; but the quantity is small, and only raised in their lightest and most sandy soil. It is generally given to the hogs, for the purpose of fattening them.

Of clover they cut on an average about one ton and an half per acre; and then let it go to feed.

seed. Vetches are now and then sowed after clover, and, according to the pleasure of the farmer, are either fed off, or mowed, and given to the horses in the stable.

The pasture and meadow land is extremely rich, and produces from one to two tons of fine hay per acre. The dry meadows are well manured, at the proper season, with good rotten dung; and the wet ones kept in excellent order by well-managed drains. The common method of forming these drains is by digging a trench, two feet and an half deep, in which small picked stones, or lumps of chalk are thrown to the height of a foot; on these is placed a layer of straw, heath, or furze; and the whole is then covered with soil. The expence of this operation is about nine-pence per perch.

The *roads* of the island (particularly in the Eastern division) are paid great attention to; and, except in the Southern parts, where their natural rocky ruggedness and inequality cannot be rectified by labor, are as good as those of Hampshire. The Western division being more thinly
in-

inhabited, the roads here are less pleasant to the traveller; though, indeed, of late years, great improvements have been made in these means of communication throughout the whole island.

They are formed and repaired, as in other places, by the respective parishes or tythings through which they pass.

CHAP. IV.

SHEEP, HORSES, COWS, AND SWINE.

THOSE profitable and useful animals, *sheep*, have been very much attended to of late years by the Isle of Wight farmers, who fully find their account in adopting this excellent system of husbandry.*

* It is only since the introduction of the Norfolk husbandry into the Isle of Wight, that the *sheep-farming* has been attended to there; the yeomanry are now fully aware of the many advantages which arise from keeping numerous flocks of these animals, whose uses are thus described by an ancient faunist. “Post majores quadrupedes ovilli pecoris secunda ratio est; quæ prima sit, si ad utilitatis magnitudinem referas. Nam id præcipuè contra frigoris violentiam protegit, corporibusque nostris liberaliora præbet velamina; et etiam elegantium mensas jucundis et numerosis dapibus exornat.”—Columella, de Re Rusticâ, lib. VII. cap. ii. Had the Roman added the *dung* to its other advantages, the catalogue would have been complete.

The

The number of sheep annually shorn is computed to amount to forty thousand. In the year 1793, five thousand lambs were sold to the London butchers alone. And during the summer of that year, when I happened to be at Newport, one of these dealers bought fifteen hundred of them.

The Dorsetshire breed is the one in general use; perhaps however, by occasionally *changing it* (a practice not sufficiently attended to here) that degeneracy might be prevented, which I observed began to appear in two or three flocks. This is a practice common with all the great sheep farmers in the West of England; and, as I have heard some of the most intelligent declare, is the only method of keeping up the original perfection of a flock.

The average weight of wool per fleece, in the Eastern part of the island, is three pounds; and in the Southern and Western parts, about three pounds and an half. Little of this is manufactured in the island, it being chiefly exported in the fleece to different trading towns.

The stock usually kept on the farms consists of sheep, cows, and horses; oxen are rare, what few there are, the farmers generally feed with straw and hay, and work them as horses.

The cows are mostly of the Devon breed, though blended with other sorts. The farmers also make a point of having a few Alderney cows in their dairies, which they think produce a better and sweeter butter than would be made without their milk.

These little animals are extremely profitable, some of them giving to the dairy, during part of the summer, nine and ten pounds of butter per week. It is matter of surprize that this breed is not more generally attended to in other parts of the kingdom, than appears to be the case. The original price of a good Alderney cow, at the place where she is imported, is seldom more than eight guineas; she is equally hardy with our own breeds, nay perhaps has the advantage of them in this respect; consumes less provender, and certainly yields as much milk, the cream of
which

which gives a richness to butter, not observable in what is made from the English cow.

The horses are of different breeds, but in general large, and, I think, black. As there is some emulation among the farmers with regard to the beauty and strength of their teams, the draught-horses are fine animals, and kept in excellent order.

It was the practice formerly among the farmers of the island, not to confine their cattle to the farm-yard in winter. Their own good sense, however, or hints from others, have convinced them of the pernicious consequences of this omission. They now adopt farm-yard foddering in the winter pretty generally, and thereby reap those certain good consequences of the practice, health to their cattle, and a great addition to their farm-yard manure.

The *hogs* are of a breed, I believe, peculiar to the island; at least I do not recollect seeing any of the same in other places. They are large and tall, marked with black spots, and have very deep sides; their bacon is excellent.

The *oxen* and *cows* are fattened with hay and turnips. The *hogs* with pease and barley-meal. The *sheep* are fed in the winter with hay and turnips.

The dairies produce, in considerable quantities, a particular kind of skim-milk cheese, emphatically called the *Isle of Wight rock*. It is extremely hard; can scarcely be cut but by a hatchet or saw; is to be masticated only by the firmest teeth; and digested only by the strongest stomachs.

CHAP. V.

WASTE-LAND; FORESTS; AND SEA-MUD.

THERE is but little *waste land* in the island, and this chiefly exhibits a sandy soil, which would probably repay the expence of being brought into tillage.

Perhaps, indeed, *Parkhurst* or *Carisbrook* forest, lying in the centre of the island, may at present be properly denominated waste land, as it remains in an inactive, useless state, without affording any advantages to the crown, of whose demesne it makes a part; and very trifling ones to the inhabitants who reside in its neighbourhood. This tract of land, which contains three thousand acres, is situated to the North of Newport and Carisbrook; and though called a *forest*, has long been without a tree of any value. There is, however,

however, a lodge still kept up, and a keeper appointed, whose office it is to preserve the deer and the wood, of which scarce a vestige remains. Notwithstanding the inattention paid hitherto by government to Parkhurst forest, the soil is in many places extremely good, and capable of being applied to the most valuable purposes. Several large spots are to be found on which the oak would thrive surprizingly well, and none are so bad as to preclude the hope of the larch, Scotch fir, and such hardy trees succeeding on them.

The obstacles which present themselves to the plan of inclosing and planting the other royal forests in the kingdom, such as the adjustment of multiplied and complicated claims, &c. would perhaps be gotten over without much difficulty, in the case of Parkhurst forest, should government think proper to appropriate it to the growth of timber; since these claims are but few, and confined to a small number of people, (the *real* ones, I mean, for that of a general right of common for black cattle, exercised by the freeholders

holders of the island, appears to be a surreptitious one) and consequently might be settled with little trouble and expence. These claims consist of a right of common for cattle and sheep; and of turbary, (or turf-cutting) and are attached to the estates immediately adjoining the forest.

In the Eastern parts of this island are some tracts of marshy ground, covered at high tide by the sea, but left bare on its reflux: the largest of these (the others being inconsiderable) is *Brading haven*, containing about nine hundred acres. Into this the sea flows through a narrow inlet. As early as the reign of Edward I. an idea was entertained that there was a possibility of recovering this usurpation of soil, from the sea, and converting it to agricultural purposes; and accordingly Sir William Ruffel, warden of the island at this period, made the attempt, and actually succeeded in gaining a considerable number of acres; a circumstance somewhat remarkable, so little attention being paid in that comparatively barbarous age, by the feudal chieftains, to any thing connected with agricultural

tural improvement. Further acquisitions were also made in the years 1562 and 1594.

The next and last attempt was of a more extensive nature, the particulars of which, as they are curious in themselves, and may afford useful hints to future adventurers in that line, I shall extract from Sir Richard Worsley's History of the Isle of Wight.

A grant of Brading haven was obtained from King James I. by Gibbs, a groom of the bed-chamber. The owners of the adjoining land contested this grant, which the king was very earnest in supporting. After a verdict obtained in the Exchequer, against the gentlemen of the island, Gibbs sold his share for two thousand pounds, to Sir Bevis Thelwall, a page of the king's bed-chamber, who admitted the famous Sir Hugh Middleton to a share. They employed a number of Dutchmen to inclose and recover the haven from the sea. The first taking of it in cost four thousand pounds, and one thousand pounds more were expended in building a dwelling-house, barn, water-mill; in trenching, quick-

quick-setting, and other necessary works ; so that, including the original purchase, the total expenditure amounted to seven thousand pounds. But after all, the nature of the ground did not answer the expectation of the undertakers ; for though that part of it adjoining Brading proved tolerably good, nearly one half of it was found to be a light running sand ; nevertheless an incontestible evidence appeared, by the discovery of a well, cased with stone, near the middle of the haven, that it had formerly been good ground. Sir Hugh Middleton tried a variety of experiments on the land which had been taken in, before he sold his share, sowing it with wheat, barley, oats, cabbage, and finally with rape-feed, which last was alone successful. But the greatest discouragement was that the sea brought up so much ooze, weeds, and sand, as choaked up the passage for the discharge of the fresh water ; and at length, in a wet season, when the inner part of the haven was full of fresh water, and a high spring tide, the waters met under the bank and made a breach. Thus

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ended

ended this expensive project; and though Sir John Oglander, who lived in the neighbourhood, confesses himself a friend to the undertaking, which, beside its principal object, tended to render that part of the country more healthy, he declares it as his opinion, that the scheme can never be resumed to any profitable purpose.

Sir Bevis Thelwall and his heirs labored to ascribe this accident to other causes, in order to preserve their claims, and to recover compensation for their losses; but the whole affair died away, and the sea still continues to overflow Brading haven.

The ill success of Sir Bevis Thelwall and Sir Hugh Middleton (whose adventurous exertions deserved a better fate,) seems sufficient to deter any future projector, from risking so large a sum as would be necessary to recover Brading haven from the sea, on a speculation that has already terminated so much to the disadvantage of those engaged in it. But should any gentleman be bold enough to attempt its embankment a second time, he would do well to pay every
attention

attention to the mode adopted by the late Count Bentinck, for shutting out the sea on his Norfolk estate ; who has shewn an example almost unique in this kingdom, of laudable spirit, unconquerable perseverance, sound judgment, and consummate skill, in adding to his property upwards of one thousand acres, formerly overwhelmed by the tides of the ocean.

CHAP. VI.

IMPROVEMENTS AND EXPERIMENTS.

THE improvements introduced of late years in the Isle of Wight husbandry, are chiefly such as have occurred in the preceding pages: the general introduction of large flocks of sheep on the different farms, the adoption of some branches of the Norfolk husbandry, and other smaller matters.

But I cannot help dwelling more particularly upon an experiment, which, as it is connected with agriculture, naturally falls within a view of that agricultural system which is practised in the Isle of Wight.

I allude to Sir Richard Worsley's *vineyard*, at his elegant cottage of St. Lawrence, in the Southern part of the island.

The

The classical owner of this charming retreat, having remarked a very sensible mildness of climate in this part of the island, (occasioned by its lying immediately open to the South, and being sheltered to the North and East by a high range of rocky hills, which at the same time shut out the biting winds, and strongly reflect the rays of the sun on the soil beneath them) determined to attempt the propagation of the vines of Bretagne, the climate of which place corresponded in some measure with that of Steephill.

For this purpose he procured the necessary number of plants, of the two grapes called *white muscadine* and *plant verd*, from which the natives of the North-west of France make a light white wine: and at the same time hired a Breton to attend to their management and cultivation.

The man began his operations in the early part of the year 1792; having gotten rather more than an acre (in a very sheltered spot) into proper order for the reception of the plants, in the month of March he put them into the ground.

This

This piece of land is divided into several beds, each bed being about twelve feet in breadth; these are separated by foot-paths, for the convenience of a near approach to the vines. The plants themselves are placed in rows, at the distance of a foot and an half from each other.

As this first experiment wore a very encouraging appearance, another piece of ground, rather more to the Eastward, and about an acre and an half in extent, was gotten into order, and a similar plantation made in it, in February 1793. These two plantations comprize together about three acres, and contain seven hundred plants.

The man who has the care of these plantations appears to understand his employment, and keeps the plants in good order: the stem of the vine is about eight inches from the ground, and the earth around it is well hoed and freed from weeds. He does not allow more than two shoots to remain on each stem; these are cut off in the ensuing March, and their place supplied by other young ones. The shoots also are not suffered

to

to run into luxuriance ; but kept at the length of two feet, or two and an half. In September 1793, when I had the pleasure of seeing these plantations, every vine bore the appearance of health and vigor. There was some little fruit on two or three of those which had been first planted ; but this prematurity was to be attributed to their being situated near a rock, and receiving the rays of the sun strongly reflected from it. The vine-dresser did not expect any considerable quantity of grapes till the fourth year after planting. He seemed to entertain no doubt as to the success of his labors, and assured me he had never before seen such strong and prosperous young plants in any vineyard.

But in order to give any possible chance to his experiment, Sir Richard has not confined himself to one mode of planting only. In a bank within his inclosures (having a slope of about forty-five degrees to the South) he has made a terrace consisting of seven stages, formed of rough stones rising like a flight of steps, one above another. Against the perpendicular face of each
stage

stage are placed trellises, and on them the vines are intended to be trained in the manner of espaliers. The plants were put in during the month of March, in the year 1793.

With respect, however, to this mode of propagating vines, it may admit of doubt whether it be likely to succeed or not, owing to the small degree of nourishment which the plants can possibly receive as they now stand. For although the vine *when mature*, will flourish where there is little soil, nay where there is apparently no soil at all, among gravel, flints, and rocks, drawing support with its minute, but far extending fibres, from sources imperceptible to the human eye ; yet, I believe, in its *infant* state, it requires more nutriment, and more room for the extension of its tender roots, than it will find where it is at present planted.

I cannot close this short, and, I fear, imperfect account of Sir Richard Worsley's vineyard, without adding every wish for the success of an experiment which displays great public spirit, and has been attended with considerable trouble and great expence.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

THE POOR; LABORERS; AND RATES OF WAGES.

THE paupers of the island are extremely well regulated and taken care of; a system of management adopted of late years, and well worth being attended to and followed in other districts.

Great abuses having been formerly experienced in the management of the poor, in the different parishes of the island, the gentlemen determined to adopt some mode of remedying the evil; and accordingly, in 1770, a general meeting of the respectable inhabitants was held, in which it was proposed that an act of parliament should be procured to consolidate the poor rates of the several parishes, and to erect a *House of Industry* for the general reception of the paupers.

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The

The propofal being agreed to, a bill was accordingly obtained, and a large building erected on part of the foreft of Parkhurft, eighty acres of which were granted by parliament for this purpofe.

The plan of this extenfive edifice is extremely good, it having every convenience that can tend to render the inhabitants healthy, cleanly, ufeul, and induftrious. It is capable of containing feven hundred people, though there are feldom above five hundred refident paupers; two-thirds of whom are constantly employed in manufacturing facks for corn, flour, and bifeuit; and kerfeys, ftockings, &c. for the ufe of the inhabitants of the houfe. The profits of thefe operations are applied to the fupport of the eftablifhment, the payment of the intereft due on the money borrowed* for carrying it into execution, and the gradual difcharge of the principal.

The act of parliament indeed provided that for the firft twenty years after the completion of the

* This amounted to £18,000.

plan.

plan, half the profits arising from the labor of the poor should be applied to the reduction of the poor rates; and half to the payment of the sum borrowed. It being, however, found, that the reduction thus made in the former was inconsiderable, it was thought prudent to apply the *whole* to the latter purpose, which has been the case for some years last past. This measure, notwithstanding, though founded in sense and reason, has given disgust to several, who are not disposed to endure a present trifling inconvenience, for an eventual permanent good; and they talk loudly of compelling, by a suit in chancery, an adherence to the letter of the act of parliament.

The *rates* throughout the island were not equalized at the time of their consolidation; but, that each parish might pay its fair proportion to the new establishment, an account was taken of the amount of their poor rates respectively, for the seven years preceding; and an average being struck, this was determined to be the ratio of their future payments, till reductions should be made from the profits of the house. Hence it is that

the rates vary considerably in different parts of the island ; thus, for instance, Brading pays two shillings and three pence in the pound upon two-thirds of the rent ; Whitwell two shillings in the pound, upon the rack rent ; and Freshwater not more than one shilling and three pence in the pound.

Every praise is due to the gentlemen of the island, for their attention to the regulation of this great establishment ; which, at the same time that it exemplifies the *possibility*, points out the *mode* of rendering the most unhappy and useless part of the community, serviceable to the community and comfortable in themselves.

I have before remarked the pleasing contrast between the laboring poor of the island, and those of most other parts of England.

This their comfortable state they chiefly owe to the occasional kindnesses of the farmers, who in general bear a high character for benevolence and generosity to those who work under them ; and their living in a great measure upon *potatoes*, a wholesome, nourishing food, and sufficiently plentiful

plentiful with them, as every laborer's family has a plantation annexed to his dwelling, stocked with this useful root. Indeed, without these assistances, they would be scarcely able to subsist, as the rate of wages is but low in the island, provisions dear, and the rents of cottages rather extravagant, being from forty shillings to two pounds fifteen shillings per annum. They are indeed neat little dwellings, built of stone, with a little garden to each, for the accommodation of its tenant.

The rates of wages, as well as hours of work, vary in different parts of the island. In Brading parish laborers have two guineas for the harvest month, and their board; eighteen pence per day for grass-mowing, and their beer; and one shilling per day during the rest of the year, when employed. Their hours of work are, in winter from seven to four, and in summer from six to five.

In the Southern and Western parts they get fourteen pence per day, but give an additional
hour

hour of labor, viz. from five to five in summer, and from seven to five in winter.

The crops, however, of the island are so large, (most of the land being in tillage) that the resident laborers are by no means sufficient for the cutting down and harvesting of them. This dearth of hands is supplied from the Western counties, and between three and four hundred laborers annually pass into the island, a little before harvest, and hire themselves to the different farmers, for the month. The usual wages for this period are two guineas if it be peace, and from forty-five to fifty shillings if it be war time. They have their board also. For the time they are employed before and after the month, they have two shillings per day, food, and liquor.

During the harvest of 1793, there were nearly four hundred Dorsetshire, Devonshire, and Somersetshire men employed in getting in the island harvests; and as a warm press was at that time on foot, a general protection from government was allowed to them, to operate during their

their passage from their own habitations to the theatre of labor, and back again.*

* Since writing the above, I am informed that an agricultural society, on an admirable plan, has been founded in the island, having for its object the improvement of the husbandry of the district. I cannot avoid adding my warm wishes for its success and prosperity.



Roman Coins.

Nº 1.



Nº 3.



Nº 5.



Roman Coins.

Nº 2.

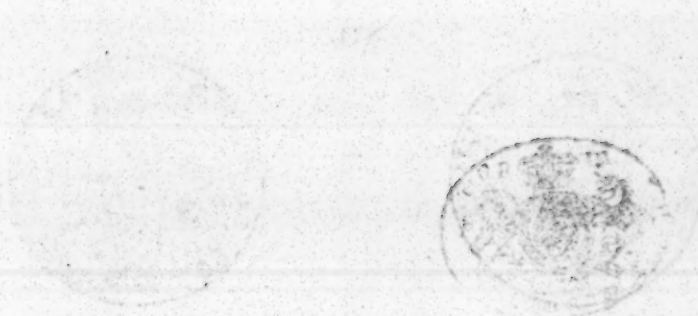


Nº 4.



Nº 6.





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APPENDIX.



A Dissertation on Six Roman Coins found in the Isle of Wight.

“ The medal, faithful to its charge of fame,
Through climes and ages bears each form and name ;
In one short view subjected to our eye,
Gods, emp'rors, heroes, fages, beauties lie.”

THE Roman coins exhibited in the annexed tables were turned up in ploughing a field to the North of Carisbrooke castle, about fifty years ago ; and are now in my possession.

They include a series of about three centuries ; and may be considered as affording an incontrovertible proof of the presence of the Romans in the Isle of Wight.

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The

The first [No. 1.] is a coin of *M. Vipsanius Agrippa*, the son-in-law of the Emperor Augustus, by his marriage with Julia, the daughter of Augustus and Scribonia. He had early espoused the cause of Octavius, and rendered him such signal services as secured the warm friendship and lasting attachment of the young emperor, who, amongst other instances of it, had him thrice appointed to the consulship. It was during the last time of his filling this office, that the coin in question appears to have been struck.*

The face of it represents the head of Agrippa, encircled with a *rostral crown*,† a reward he

* It may be observed that the power of coining money was vested in the senate; hence the initials S. C. or *senatus consulto*, by the decree of the senate, on the reverse of most of the pieces. It was also an usual compliment, paid by this body to the emperors, or their relations, whenever any thing signally glorious or serviceable to the state had been performed by them, to stamp the circumstance on coins, and send them into circulation, with a few initials expressive of it.

† The engraver has made a mistake, omitting the *rostrum*, or prow, on the front of the crown, and making it simply a laurel chaplet. The rostral crown was bestowed on the man who first leaped into the enemy's ship during the engagement.

received.

received from the hand of the emperor in return for his gallantry in several sea actions; particularly in one fought with Sextus Pompeius, to which, and its honorable reward, Virgil alludes in the following lines:

“ Parte aliâ ventis et diis Agrippa secundis
Arduus agmen agens; cui belli insigne superbum
Tempora navali fulgent rostrata coronâ.”*

The neck of Agrippa is represented as bare, and the hair short and curling. These were fashions amongst the old Romans, who left both the arms and neck entirely exposed to view; a knowledge of which circumstance throws considerable light on, and gives additional beauty to that natural picture of jealousy so admirably painted by the Roman Poet;

* Virgil, *Æneid*, VIII. et Dio, lib. XLIX. Agrippa was the second person who received the reward of a rostral crown for his naval prowess; the learned *Varro* anticipated him in this honor about thirty years before. Pliny, III. ii. et VII. xxx.

Ss 2

“ Cum

“ Cum tu Lydia Telephi
Cervicem roseam, et cerea Telephi
Laudas brachia, vae meum
 Fervens difficili bile tumet jecur.”*

“ Ah! when on Telephus his charms,
 His rosy neck, and waxen arms,
 My Lydia’s praise unceasing dwells,
 What gloomy spleen my bosom swells.”†

The reverse of this coin bears the figure of Neptune, holding a trident in his left hand, and treading with his contrary foot on a kind of globe.

The coin is of brass, the size of the engraving.‡

* Hor. Carm. lib. I. ode xiii.

† Francis.

‡ The Romans very wisely struck all their devices on the baser metals, for two reasons; that the knowledge of the circumstances they were meant to commemorate might be the more universally imparted; and that covetousness might not annihilate the monument, by defacing the device, and melting the metal. It is to be remembered, that what we call Roman *coins* are nothing more than the common currency of Italy, in the times of the ancients.

No.

No. 2. is a coin of Tiberius Cæsar, who was adopted by, and succeeded Augustus. The unnatural brutality and infamous practices of this disgrace to manhood are too well known, to render any detail of his character necessary. This coin appears to have been struck during his second consulship; in which he obtained, by the permission of Augustus, the title of Imp. or *Imperator*, the *victorious general*, in consequence of his recent successes in Germany; eight years before the birth of our Saviour.

The reverse represents the figure of *Victory*, standing on the *rostrum* of a ship; ornamented, as the ancients represented her, with a pair of wings, and bearing in one hand a chaplet of laurel, and in the other a branch of palm;* the rewards

* *Alatam* quoque fingi pingique solitam ob velocitatem dixeris (quo enim citius victoria parta, ac breviori spatio victi fugatique hostes, eo illustrior est ac celebrior;) vel quod mobilis sit, nunc his nunc illis secunda. *Palma* Victoriæ tributa, quod ejus rami, ut auctor est Aristoteles, Plutarchus, Plinius, et A. Gellius, lib. III. Noct. Att. cap. vi. ponderi imposito resistunt, nec premi se patiuntur, imò contra obfistunt. *Corona* datur *laurea*, quia est vinculum, quo et victi hostes alligari solent, aut verius præmium est victori. Ant. August. Dialog. ii. Antiq. Numismat. p. 23.

of those who had signalized themselves in battle.*

“ Adfuit ipfa fuis alis Victoria.”†

And winged Victory herself was there.

Nor has our own great Poet forgotten these appendages of the Goddess, in his sublime description of the Messiah, when going to the discomfiture of Satan and his angels :

“ He in celestial panoply all arm’d
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
Ascended ; at his right hand Victory
Sat *eagle-wing’d* ; beside him hung his bow
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stor’d,
And from about him fierce effusion roll’d
Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles
dire.” ‡

No. 3. is a coin struck in honor of *Germanicus*, on a glorious and memorable occasion. The face of it represents him in the habit of a Roman soldier, apparently in the act of addressing a body

* “ *Lentæ victoris præmia palma.*”—Ovid.

† Claud. de Sex. Conf. Honorii.

‡ Paradise Lost, book vi. line 760.

of people: the reverse exhibits his triumphal chariot, in which he again appears. This last circumstance marks the time of the medal being coined, which was during the consulship of C. Cœlius Rufus, and L. Pomponius Flaccus, in the seventeenth year of the Christian æra, when Germanicus received the honors of a triumph, for his victories over the Germans.*

On both the faces of the coin, this hero is represented as holding in his left hand a kind of sceptre surmounted with a bird. This is the standard or eagle of the nineteenth legion, one of the three that perished with the unfortunate Varus, which was recovered during the auspicious campaigns of Germanicus, against the barbarians who had deceived and destroyed that credulous commander.†

Germanicus

* Tacit. Annal. II. cap. xli.

† “Bructeros sua urentes, expeditâ cum manu L. Stertinius, missu Germanici, fudit; interque cædem et prædam reperit *undecimæ legionis aquilam*, cum Varo amissam.”—Tacit. Ann. lib. I. “Ipse [Germanicus] majoribus copiis
Marfos

Germanicus was the son of Antonia Minor, and Drusus Major, and cut off in the prime of life, by poison, at the secret instigation of the Emperor Tiberius.*

No. 4. exhibits the head of Antonia Minor, daughter of Mark Anthony and Octavia, and mother of Germanicus and the Emperor Claudius. She bore an amiable character, and met with the general fate of superior worth in those days—a violent death; dying by poison during the reign of Tiberius.† The coin was struck when her son Claudius had obtained the sovereignty, in honor of his deceased parent. He is represented, on the reverse, with the close habit

Marfos irrumpit, quorum dux Maloendus, nuper in deditionem acceptus, propinquo loco defossam Varianæ legionis aquilam, modico præsidio servari indicat. Missa extemplo manus, quæ hostem a fronte eliceret, alii, qui terga circumgressi, recluderent humum: utrisque adfuit fortuna.”—Tacit. Annal. lib. II.

* Sueton. in Vit. Calig. cap. i. Tacit. Annal. lib. I. et II.

† Tacit. Annal. lib. III.

and

and veiled head of the *pontifex maximus*, or high priest, (for the emperors were invested with all the offices of the priesthood) bearing in his right hand a kind of vessel, called a *simpuvium*, anciently used in the sacrificial rites.

No. 5. is a coin of the Emperor Vespasian, struck during his seventh consulship, in the year of our Lord 76. At this period the empire was blessed with universal peace, the emperor having, in the preceding year, dedicated and furnished a temple to that goddess. Hence the figure of Peace became a very proper subject for the reverse of this coinage, and the senate, (who regulated the mint) by adopting it, paid a noble though tacit compliment to their emperor, through whose exertions this blessing had been procured.

The goddess is represented on the reverse as resting on a pillar, to shew the duration and security of the empire's quiet. In her right hand

Tt

she

she holds an olive branch,* one of her usual emblems :

“ Ingreditur, ramumque tenens popularis olivæ.”†

In her left a cornucopiæ, expressive of the plenty produced by the arts of peace :

“ Interea pax arva colat, pax candida primùm
Duxit araturos sub juga curva boves ;
Pax aluit vites et succos condidit uvæ,
Funderet ut nato testa paterna merum ;
Pace bidens vomerque vigent—”‡

“ Quæ cornu retinet divite copiam.”§

* “ In aliis plurimis virgo est, [pax] altera oleæ ramum, altera gestans cornu copiæ. Virgo est, ut simplex et integra ; clara pacis argumenta. Bello namque virgines contra jus stuprantur ac rapiuntur. Olea signum est pacificatoris, ut legati teste Virgilio. In cornu copiæ observes spicas, uvas, aliosque fructus, cum vomere, omniaque in hoc cornu, quod Acheloi fuit, cum in taurum mutatus Herculem superare conabatur ; qui alterum fregit cornu, quod Nymphæ acceptum floribus et pancarpio, ut Naso fabulatur, implêrunt.”—Ant. Augustini Dialog. ii. Antiq.

† Ovid, *Metam.* line 7.

‡ Tibullus, *El.* X. line 1.

§ Seneca, *Trag.* in *Medeâ*, de pace.

It

It may be observed also that the flowing vest of the figure appears to be gathered or tucked up before. This seems to be intended, by the Roman mint-masters, who had a meaning in every thing, to convey a stronger idea of the abundance produced by a cessation from war; for we are to imagine this fold of the garment filled likewise with the gifts of Ceres and Pomona, according to the description of Tibullus :

“ At nobis, pax alma, veni, spicamque teneto,
Perfluat et pomis candidus *ante sinus.*”

The sixth and last coin is one of Galerius Valerius Maximianus, who, from a very base origin, was raised to the purple, jointly with Constantius, in the year of our Lord 304. He was remarkable for his propensity to every vice which could dishonor our nature; and an inflexible dislike to the Christian religion, which he persecuted with the utmost rigor. The ancient fathers of the church assure us his punishments for his iniquities commenced even in this life, by the visitation of a tedious, horrible, and loath-

some disease, of which he at length expired, hateful to himself and detested by all around him.*

The reverse bears the figure of the *genius* of the empire, holding a *patera*, or sacrificial plate, in his right hand, and a cornucopiæ in his left; for such was the fanciful superstition of the Romans, that they not only believed each individual had his own particular genius or dæmon; but that kingdoms, states, and cities possessed a similar advantage, every one having a presiding intelligence, perpetually employed in averting evil and inducing good.†

* Eusebius, lib. VII. cap. xv.

† “Varios custodes urbibus mens divina distribuit. Ut animæ nascentibus, ita populis fatales genii dividuntur.”—Symmachus.

A Copy

*A Copy of the Rate made March 17th, 1653.
for the Maintenance of the Minister of New-
port. Vide page 119.*

WHEREAS this towne and Borough is become very populous, consisting of two thousand five Hundred Souls and upwards, and the Church or Chappell thereof is not endowed wth. any means or Maintenance for the subsistence or livelyhood of any Minister, or Ministers, to preach the word of God, or officiate therein as a minister, or ministers; By means whereof all Godly ministers are utterly discouraged to take the Care and Burthen of the said place and people upon themselves, to the great damage and eternall hazard of the Soules of the poore inhabitants of this same towne. The wch. the Mayor and chief Burgeses of this Burrough are willing, as much as in them lyeth, to remove, redresse, and for the future psent, it being a duty incumbent on all magistrates, and therefore have
thought

thought fitt, to constitute, ordeyne, and appoint, and do hereby at this p^rsent assembly, constitute, ordeyne, and appoint, That for and towards the maintenance of such minister, or ministers, as are, or shall be thought fit, and appointed to officiate in the aforesaid church or chappell, a rate, Tax, or Assessment, not exceeding the some of one shilling and sixpence upon every pound, for one whole yeare, be made on all the Lands and Tents. lying wthin the same Borough, and also on all the Rents and personall Estate, and Estates, of all the Inhabitants, residing wthin the aforesaid Burrough, with respect to their best abilities in that behalfe, by the Mayor, and the chiefe Burgeffes of the same Burrough, or the Major Part of them, together wth. Eight, six, or four of the able Inhabitants residing withing ; same Burrough. And that those for the same purpose shall be from time to time elected, named, and chosen by the said Mayor, and chief Burgeffes for the time being, for that purpose.*

* Sir R. Worsley's History, Append. No. XLIV.

ERRATA.

PAGE	LINE	FOR	READ
99,	5,	riseless,	useless.
101,	5,	natural,	nature.
171,	2,	twelve,	ten.
192,	8,	crush,	crash.
216,	18,	dises,	discs.
228,	21,	στοργη,	στοργη.
232,	16,	ditto,	ditto.
265,	7,	μελετην,	μελετην.
268,	3,	things,	themes.



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